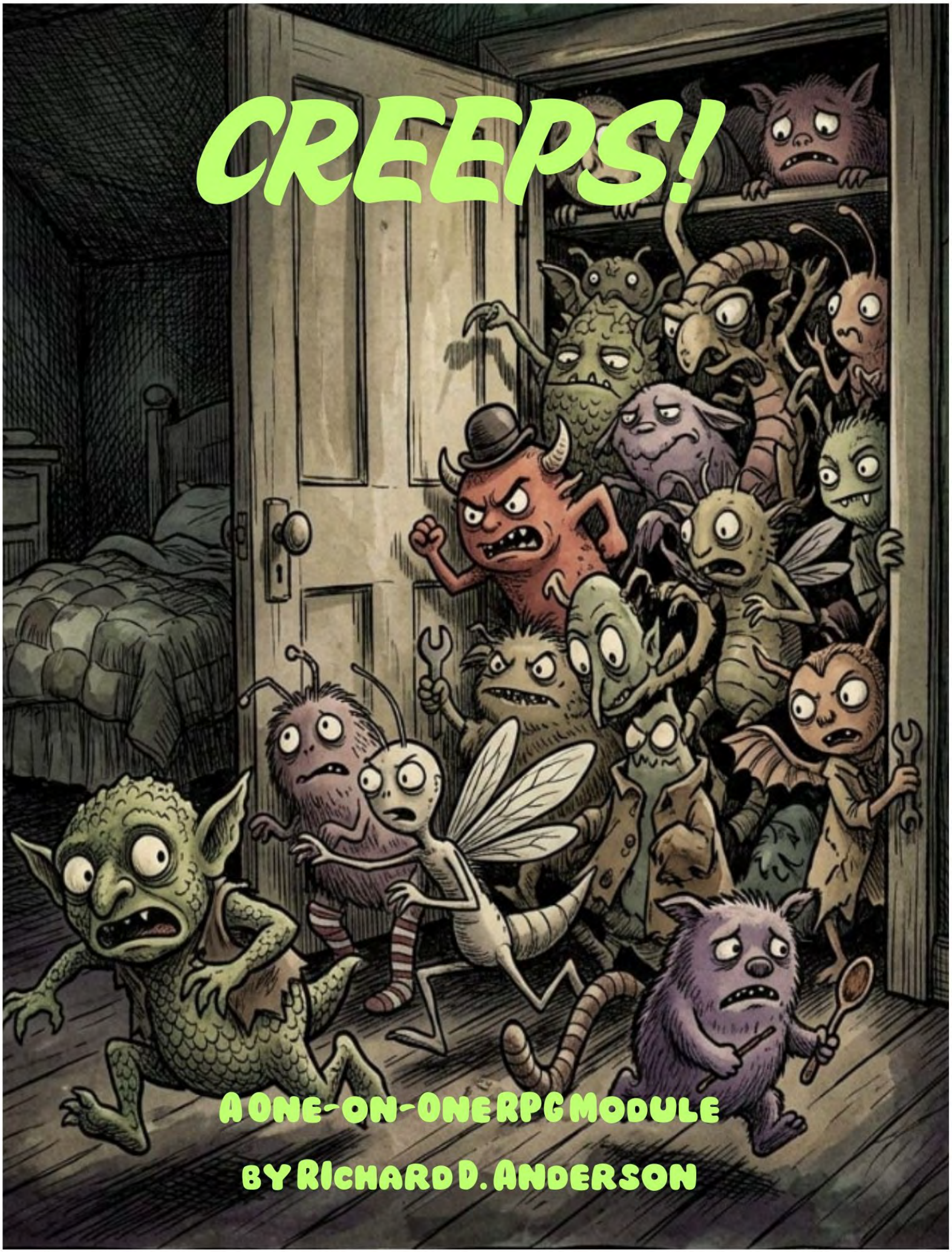
CREEPS!
A One-on-One RPG Module
by Richard D. Anderson

CREEPS!

A One-on-One RPG module of Dream Portals, Odd Little Guardians, and Hidden Horrors

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Designer's Notes

In 1993 I had purchased a copy of a tabletop rpg called "The Whispering Vault;" it was essentially a game in which players portrayed "good guy" versions of dark humanoids akin to Cenobites from Hellraiser, and it was quite the game. The concept was very interesting and influential to me. A few months later, when I was in my prime of writing/designing tabletop rpgs of my own and distributing them by means of the Game Designers Forum on AOL, I began working on a little game called **CREEPS!**; not only did I have it uploaded on AOL for download in glorious RTF, I gave away hundreds of copies at the following DragonCon in Atlanta. I received emails from fans from at least three countries, and it was a lot of fun to design. I later contributed two expansion downloads, supporting fans happily.

CREEPS! may, at first glance, remind some readers of *Monsters, Inc.* in the broadest possible sense: strange beings tied to human fear, hidden worlds brushing up against bedroom life, and the idea that what waits in the dark might have a society of its own. That resemblance is real enough to make a useful point of comparison—but it ends quickly once you step through the door.

Where *Monsters, Inc.* is bright, corporate, family-friendly, and built around the comedy of a monster workplace, **CREEPS!** is stranger, older, and much more interested in what fear actually means. Its hidden world is not a clean fantasy bureaucracy with tidy hallways and manageable problems. It is Limbo: a sprawling nexus of tunnels, markets, shrines, fungal forests, dream-fractures, dangerous roads, neighboring realms, and things that do not fit comfortably into bedtime logic. The beings who live there are not just cartoon workers with jobs. They are survivors, traders, wanderers, witches, Vigil patrols, smugglers, scholars, and little horrors trying to get by in a realm where every door may open into wonder, trouble, or both at once.

That does not make **CREEPS!** humorless. Quite the opposite. The setting has a dark, crooked sense of humor running through its bones. It understands that the macabre and the absurd often live in the same closet. A ferryman can be both ominous and petty. A fungal marketplace can be unnerving and full of arguments over soup. A dream-haunted ruin can still contain someone trying to sell you a lamp, a curse, and yesterday's bread at a package rate. The comedy in **CREEPS!** is not broad or cute. It is the kind that comes from personality, pressure, bad timing, and the sheer indignity of trying to behave professionally in a world held together by fear, trade, and unstable portals.

If *Monsters, Inc.* asks, "What if monsters had an industry built around children's screams?", **CREEPS!** asks much richer questions. What if fear left roads behind it? What if dreams had weight? What if closets were not just punchlines or set dressing, but part of a larger living geography? What if the things in the dark had cultures, politics, religions, economies, and neighboring powers of their own? What if the hidden world was not safer for being hidden—just older, weirder, and more practiced at surviving?

That is the real difference. *Monsters, Inc.* makes the unseen world charming. **CREEPS!** makes it alive.

And alive, in this case, means funnier, sadder, harsher, more magical, more dangerous, and far more interesting.

“THE SCRATCHING BEYOND THE DOORFRAME”

A Vigil Cohort Tale of Portal Investigation

The great hollow of Limbo was unusually quiet tonight. Not the peaceful kind of quiet—no, this was the *waiting* quiet, the kind that pools in corners and clings to the edges of lantern-light.

Four creeps hurried along a narrow stone walkway carved just above a Closetways hub. A dull ambient glow from an unknown source filled the area.

Vix Bramble—the cohort’s operative and self-appointed leader—checked the sputtering Vigil lantern hanging from his belt.
“It’s flickering again,” muttered Vix. “Lanterns don’t flicker unless a portal’s getting uppity.”

Behind him, the taller spindle-limber named Rist Undercoil stretched his long limbs and flexed his toes. “Or unless you forgot to oil it again.”

“I oiled it!” Vix snapped. “Probably.”

Talla Driftlatch, a gloom-gazer scryer with pupil-less silver eyes, paused mid-step, head tilting. “There’s something ahead. The air is bending… *wrong*. The portal is stirring. Something brushed against its edges.”

The fourth member, Bim Quietfist—a pebble-foot warden whose round body clanked softly with mismatched armor—gulped loudly. “Does it feel like a trespasser wrong, or an invader wrong? I prefer the first. The first doesn’t usually involve screaming.”

Talla didn’t blink. “Hard to say.”

“I don’t like that answer,” Bim said.

The cohort turned a corner toward a corridor marked by Vigil chisels. The stone passage narrowed, lit only by their lantern’s uncertain glow. The portal chamber lay beyond.

The warning runes ahead buzzed faintly—dim violet arcs dancing across the stone. Vix felt the hair on his arms lift. “Yep. That’s definitely a level-two alert.”

Rist tapped a rune with one elongated finger. “Scratch marks here. Fresh.”
He leaned close. “Three claws. Small spacing. Something light on its feet.”

Bim’s voice shook. “A shadowling? A night-skitter? A—”

“No,” Talla murmured. “Too deliberate. Too… curious.”

They approached the wooden portal door.
One of thousands throughout Limbo, but this one was notorious among creeps: it connected to a child’s bedroom in the Human World—a location that had produced a lot of nightmares recently.

The door creaked open a fraction of an inch on its own.

“Who opened that?” Vix hissed.

Nobody answered.

The chamber went colder.

Vix swallowed. “Okay. Form up. Talla, watch the edges. Rist, flank left. Bim, stop shaking long enough to cover the right—”

A sound—*scratch—scratch—scratch*—began from the other side of the doorframe.

Not on the wood.

Not on the floor.

High up.

Across the ceiling.

Talla spoke barely above a whisper. “It knows we’re here.”

Rist was the first to move. He bent his long limbs and scurried along the wall, climbing beside the frame of a neighboring portal. His gaze scanned the ceiling.

"Movement," he whispered. "Something small. Fast."

"Stay calm," Vix said, though his voice cracked on the second word.

The scratching stopped abruptly.

Then—
tap... tap... tap...
Three quick knocks on the *inside* of the portal door.

Bim squeaked, armor rattling. "Nope! No! Absolutely not! Portals aren't supposed to knock! They are *doors*, not guests!"

Talla stepped forward. Her eyes glowed faintly with inner silver. "The anomaly is not inside the Human World side. It's within the threshold. Something is *between* places."

She raised her hands, letting a thin ribbon of violet scry-light coil from her palms. It illuminated the space between the cracked-open door and the stone frame—showing a creeping distortion, like ripples in warm air.

Then a small shape slid halfway through.
Black.
Long-limbed.
Wide grin stretching impossibly far.
Eyes like marbles dipped in candlewax.

A **night-between**, one of the lesser creatures born from dream turbulence.

Vix inhaled sharply. "Of all the things—"

The night-between chittered and reached one spindly arm farther in, fingers stretching like pulled taffy.

Rist dropped from the ceiling. "On it!"

He landed on the creature's arm, wrapping his own limbs around it. The creature screeched—a static-filled sound that made the lantern flicker violently.

Talla's voice was steady. "It's weakened by light. Vix, the lantern!"

"I'm trying!" Vix shook it. The lantern glowed brighter for a moment but sputtered.

"Bim!" Rist shouted, wrestling the creature's bending limb. "Hit the lantern!"

"What?!"

"HIT IT!"

Bim reared back and slammed a gauntleted fist into the lantern's base.

The lantern blazed—pure radiant fire bursting from its crystal core.

The night-between shrieked and recoiled, snapping its too-long arm back through the doorway. Rist tumbled backward, landing in a heap atop Bim.

The portal slammed shut with a thunderous

BOOM that echoed through the chamber.

Silence.

Smoke curled from the lantern but held steady.

Vix exhaled shakily. "Good work, Cohort. Very... loud work."

Bim wheezed. "My everything hurts."

Talla stepped closer to the sealed portal. "The disturbance has passed. It retreated fully. No residue left. The human child's dreams likely called it, but it lacked the strength to cross properly."

Rist stretched his limbs back into place. “At least it wasn’t a full invasion.”

“Or a truant,” Bim muttered. “I can’t deal with paperwork tonight.”

Vix squared his shoulders. “Cohort. Mark this portal as unstable, level two. Request reinforcement wards from the enchanters. And someone please remind me to actually oil the lantern later.”

“You won’t,” Talla said calmly.

“I probably won’t,” Vix agreed.

As they turned back toward the main hall, the lantern hummed warmly, casting soft light across the path. The cohort, bruised and rattled, trudged homeward together—four small protectors of Limbo, facing the strange, the eerie, and the unexpected with equal parts bravery and chaos.

Somewhere far behind them, in the dark of the sealed chamber, a faint *tap... tap... tap...* came again on the other side of the portal.

But the cohort was already gone.

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PLAYERS GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

There are worlds of shining towers, noble banners, brass fanfares, and heroes who stride across polished causeways as if history itself had been waiting for their boots.

CREEPS! is not one of those worlds.

This is a roleplaying game of **Dream Portals, Odd Little Guardians, and Hidden Horrors**. Its stories do not begin in sunlit courts or clean battlefields. They begin in dim halls, fungus-lit lanes, cramped stairwells, rattling canal walks, forgotten schoolrooms, cupboard doors that open a little too far, and neighborhoods where everyone knows everyone else's business right up until the wall starts humming and the local Vigil post has to nail the shutters closed. This is a game about small people in a strange world doing necessary work in bad conditions. It is about duty, secrecy, survival, humor in the wrong places, and the long, exhausting labor of keeping the weirdness from spilling too far into ordinary life.

At first glance, Limbo may seem whimsical. It is full of odd little beings, hidden passages, improbable creatures, and the sort of civic inconveniences that only become charming if they are not currently chewing on your sleeve. There are lantern streets and fungal terraces, strange pets and stranger neighbors, old rituals, old districts, older grudges, and enough eccentricity to convince an outsider that the whole place survives by some blend of charm, stubbornness, and aggressively improvised municipal policy. That impression is not entirely false. Limbo *is* whimsical, sometimes. It is also intimate, ancient, damp, secretive, structurally temperamental, and haunted by the fact that too many doors lead somewhere else.

That is where the Vigil comes in.

The Vigil exists because someone must stand between Limbo and what keeps trying to enter it, leak into it, unsettle it, devour it, warp it, frighten it, or convince it that opening one more impossible doorway is surely a manageable civic experiment. Its members are not distant knights or jeweled archmages. They are Wardens, Dastards, Night Schoolers, Scryers, Engineers, Trackers, Artificers, Enchanters, Binder-Kin, and Operatives: capable little guardians trained to deal with Dream Passages, Truants, Trespassers, seal failures, hidden routes, panic events, district breaches, strange creatures, stranger magics, and the deeply repetitive administrative truth that if one child vanishes through a wardrobe, five adults will make everything worse before the proper forms even leave the shelf.

That is the heart of the game.

CREEPS! is about being one of those guardians.

Not an abstract adventurer. Not an all-purpose hero detached from place. A *Creep*: a member of a living, layered, eccentric, burdened society whose survival depends on practical courage. Your character belongs to Limbo. They know its smells, its moods, its hazards, its routes, its jokes, its warnings, and its nightly little indignities. They may love it, resent it, protect it, hide from it, study it, patch it, patrol it, or swear at it with profound intimacy. But they belong to it. And because they belong to it, when something goes wrong, they are among the ones expected to respond.

This book is built to support exactly that kind of story.

A GAME OF SMALL HEROICS

The fantasy of **CREEPS!** is not one of domination. It is one of endurance, wit, expertise, and nerve.

Your character is not powerful because they can stride through armies untouched. They are powerful because they can hear when a portal is beginning to go wrong. Because they know which district broker to bribe, which rune line not to step across, which canal rail is about to give way, which child is on the verge of panic, which kind of monster responds badly to lantern glare, which route through the Lower Warrens will still be open after curfew, and how to keep moving after the first clean hit turns into blood in the boot. In this game, competence is intimate. It is local. It is situational. It is often the difference between "the district remains unsettled for a week" and "three blocks are now sealed under revised lantern policy."

That means the tone of play matters.

CREEPS! is strange, but it is not nonsense. It is funny, but it is not weightless. It is dark, but it is not joyless. Its humor usually arrives in the same place fear does: in the gap between how absurd a thing sounds and how sincerely dangerous it proves to be once you are close enough to smell it. A Pocket Dragon hiding in someone's satchel is delightful right up until the satchel is sitting next to a cracked alchemical burner. A Black Market broker who insists on being addressed by a title they definitely gave themselves is amusing until you realize they know where the children have been going missing. A district elder who complains endlessly about spore dust and "modern seal methods" is comic until their pantry begins opening into somewhere that is not, in any respectable sense, a pantry.

If the game is played well, these tones support one another rather than fighting each other. Limbo should feel inhabited. It should feel textured. It should feel like a place where people have found ways to make life possible around permanent wrongness. That means there is food, gossip, school, work, friendship, bureaucracy, petty crime, romance, local pride, neighborhood feuds, favorite tea stalls, tolerated nuisances, beloved weird pets, and old songs no one sings above a whisper near certain doors. It also means there are things in the walls, names in the archives, rituals in the basements, and routes the Vigil monitors because everyone involved prefers not to explain what happened last time.

THE ONE-ON-ONE HEART OF THE GAME

Although **CREEPS!** can support a patrol or full group of characters, it is built with a strong **One-on-One** spirit at its center: one Creepmaster, one protagonist, and the close dramatic focus that comes from following a single Creep through the strange labor of protecting Limbo. That structure matters because the setting thrives on intimacy. A solo protagonist can have a district they know, a passage they fear, a bonded companion they trust, a route they patrol, a family they avoid disappointing, a mentor they cannot quite

impress, and a personal relationship to the weirdness that a larger ensemble game sometimes spreads more broadly.

This gives **CREEPS!** a particular flavor in play.

A single Creep in this world is never merely "the party's scout" or "the group's caster." They are *this* Night Schooler with too much old lore in their head and too little sleep. *This* Warden of the Passages who knows exactly which threshold has failed three times in six years and still claims not to be superstitious about it. *This* Dastard whose black-market contacts are useful in deeply regrettable ways. *This* Binder-Kin whose companion notices dream shifts before anyone else does. The focus narrows, and because it narrows, the world becomes more personal.

That does not make the stories smaller. If anything, it often makes them sharper.

One-on-One play in **CREEPS!** is ideal for mysteries, dangerous errands, rescue work, quiet horror, threshold incidents, personal patrol stories, and district-centered campaigns where one guardian's relationships and expertise matter deeply. It supports the feeling that your Creep is not just part of Limbo's strange civic machinery, but a meaningful moving piece within it. When a solo protagonist fails, the cost feels immediate. When they succeed, the triumph feels earned in a way that larger scenes sometimes blur. One little guardian standing in front of the wrong door at the right time can define the entire tone of a campaign.

At the same time, the material in this book can expand outward into patrol-based group play. The Vigil is an institution full of specialties, and Limbo is absolutely large enough to require cooperation. But even there, the One-on-One heart remains important. Every Creep should still feel like a person with a role, a history, a place, and a reason the setting notices when they walk into a room.

LIMBO: A PLACE OF HIDDEN DOORS

If the Vigil is the book's beating civic heart, Limbo is its body.

Limbo is not merely a fantasy underworld or a whimsical dream city. It is a layered realm built around passages, thresholds, districts, hidden routes, old infrastructures, old magics, and the constant reality that space is less trustworthy here than any reasonable builder would allow. There are streets and warrens, terraces and waterways, markets and workshops, schools and shrines, hidden channels and public squares, and beneath, between, and behind them all the deeper truth that doors matter. Closets matter. Frames matter. Thresholds matter. A room matters not only for what is in it, but for where it may decide to lead under the wrong pressure.

Dream Passages are one of the great defining elements of the setting. They are not merely portals in the simple sense. They are points where emotion, dream, symbolic resonance, old structure, hidden lore, and transitive reality can meet badly enough to become traversable. Some are known, monitored, ritualized, and maintained. Some are weak points waiting to be noticed. Some are accidents. Some are old disasters wearing respectable woodwork. Their existence changes everything. It changes architecture, law, childhood, fear, profession, labor, secrecy, religion, schooling, black-market behavior, district culture, and the shape of what the Vigil is expected to

manage. In a world of Dream Passages, a wardrobe is never only furniture if the story is having a bad evening.

That means the setting supports several overlapping kinds of play:

- **incident response**, where something has gone wrong and must be contained
- **investigation**, where signs, routes, witnesses, and odd residues must be interpreted
- **patrol drama**, where duty, fatigue, public trust, and local knowledge matter
- **occult maintenance**, where magical infrastructure is as important as swords
- **quiet horror**, where the room becomes wrong one detail at a time
- **fantasy civic labor**, where heroism often looks like procedure under strain
- **dark whimsy**, where the strange is funny until it truly is not

All of these modes are supported by the same central truth: Limbo is a place worth protecting, even when it is exhausting.

WHAT YOU DO IN CREEPS!

You solve problems before they become larger ones.

You respond to Alerts. You escort lost children. You pursue Trespassers. You hunt or drive off things that came through the wrong way. You Quiet the Realm when thresholds destabilize. You manage witnesses, panic, crowds, false rumors, black-market leaks, district fears, old ritual sites, half-trained students, and improvised civic catastrophe. You hold stairs. You shut doors. You open other doors. You investigate scenes where the evidence includes footprints, dream residue, torn fabric, old glyph fragments, frightened testimony, and a noise everyone claims not to have heard before the lantern blew out. You bargain, track, patch, fight, soothe, carry, study, improvise, and endure.

Sometimes you win elegantly.

More often, you win just well enough that the district is still there tomorrow and the report can be filed without using the phrase *structural screaming event* more than once.

That is not lesser heroism. In this game, it is the exact kind that matters.

THIS BOOK

The rules in **CREEPS!** are written to support that experience. They are meant to handle personal scenes, dangerous incidents, intimate horror, practical fantasy action, and pressure that builds through routes, rituals, witnesses, and unstable places rather than only through conventional battlefield logic. Character creation, skills, archetypes, Clocks, Destiny, task resolution, Combat & Harm, and the wider setting tools all point toward one goal: making Limbo feel alive enough to protect and strange enough that protecting it always costs something.

You will find systems here for:

- creating a Creep of the Vigil
- defining archetypal training and role
- resolving task-based action cleanly and consistently
- handling danger, harm, and combat
- using Clocks to track fear, pressure, instability, and progress
- working with Dream Passages and portal events

- navigating district life and the hidden labor of the Vigil
- supporting both single protagonist and group play within the same strange civic fantasy

What you should expect from play is not abstract dungeon conquest. It is **immersive, weirdly local fantasy guardianship**.

You are not descending into darkness because treasure is there.
You are going because the district cannot afford not to know what is making that sound.
You are not investigating a threshold because mysteries are fashionable.
You are doing it because if someone does not, a family will lose a child, a route will fail, a witness will panic, and three elders will begin loudly blaming one another before the moon is halfway up.
You are not standing in the doorway because you enjoy being clawed by things from elsewhere.
You are standing there because you are a Creep, and this is what Creeps do when the weirdness gets ideas.

So welcome to Limbo.

Mind the thresholds.
Do not trust a quiet wardrobe.
Be polite to local district elders, even when they are wrong.
Never assume the black market is less organized than the Vigil.
If the room gets colder and your companion starts making offended noises, leave bravado to larger fools.
And if you hear scratching from the far side of a door that absolutely did not used to be there, fetch your lantern, fetch your gear, fetch whatever courage you have left after supper, and remember:

someone has to keep this place in one piece.

It may as well be you.

QUESTION: WHAT IS A CREEP?

Creeps are small, strange, often adorable, frequently unsettling creatures who serve as the vigilant guardians of Limbo's countless portals. Standing between **2 and 4 feet tall,** though an occasional oddity might be smaller or larger, Creeps come in a dizzying variety of shapes and features:

- furry
- scaly
- moss-grown
- shadow-skinned
- bramble-bodied
- winged or wingless
- vaguely humanoid, distinctly not
- stitched, feathered, or crystalline

Most Creeps are **composites**—their Kin blending traits of:

- humanoid
- beast
- fey
- dreamstuff
- demonic or shadowy ancestry
- plantlike growths
- astral echoes

No two Creeps are exactly alike… though most often share similarities with others of its type, especially within the same **Kin** category.

Creeps are the custodians of Limbo's dimensional web, each trained to watch, maintain, protect, and—when necessary—combat threats emerging from unstable portals.

They are clever.
They are strange.
They are brave when they must be.
And above all:

Creeps protect dreamers.

CHAPTER 1: CHARACTER CREATION

Every Creep begins as a rumor with teeth.

Before the first chase across a roofline, before the first whispered bargain in a crooked tunnel, before the first bad decision involving Sorcery, Limbo, or a door best left unopened, there is the small but serious business of deciding exactly what sort of strange little being has wandered into the story. Character creation in **CREEPS!** is where the player takes hold of that question and answers it with claws, moss, smoke, static, velvet, bark, cracked porcelain, moonlight, or whatever other unsettling inheritance the dark has seen fit to provide.

The process in this chapter follows the structure of the **One-on-One RPG** system while shaping it to fit the peculiar body and spirit of **CREEPS!**. The result should feel clean at the table, but flavorful on the page. By the time these steps are complete, the player should have more than a set of numbers. They should have a distinct little nightmare with a face, a voice, a way of moving, a way of getting into trouble, and at least one excellent reason the Creepmaster will regret underestimating them.

Some Creeps are quick and silent. Some are stout and stubborn. Some are charming in the way a glowing skull in a velvet bonnet might be called charming by a person whose judgment cannot be trusted. Some are built for skulking, some for scuffling, some for talking, some for tinkering, some for surviving the sort of magical accidents that usually leave a stain and a cautionary tale. None of them are ordinary, and this chapter makes no effort to pretend otherwise.

To create a Protagonist in **CREEPS!**, follow these steps in order:

1. Roll or Select Lineage (Kin)
   1a. Determine Inherent Creep Traits
2. Choose Archetype
3. Generate Primary Attributes
4. Derive Essence
5. Select Skills and Set Skill Bases
6. Distribute Skill Points
7. Establish Destiny
8. Starting Gear and Money
9. Companion Setup
10. Final Checklist

Step 1: Roll or Select Lineage (Kin)

The first thing a player determines is the Creep's **Kin**.

Kin is lineage, family form, inherited shape, and old blood made visible. It answers the immediate and unavoidable question: *what are you?* In a setting populated by strange little peoples who can be bark-skinned, stone-bodied, plush-soft, insect-limbed,

fungus-capped, shadow-smudged, or lit from within like badly contained secrets, this matters a great deal. Kin does not merely determine appearance. It establishes the Creep's physical legacy, grants a distinctive trait tied to that form, imposes a drawback, and provides a modest mechanical adjustment that helps shape early play.

A player may either roll for Kin or select a result that suits the character concept. Rolling is ideal for players who want discovery, surprise, and the occasional deeply inconvenient blessing. Selection is ideal for players who already know what kind of creature they want to bring into the story. Both methods are equally valid.

Kin should always feel meaningful, but never so large that it swallows the rest of the character whole. It is the first foundation stone, not the whole house. The Creep's lineage should matter when the player describes them, when the Creepmaster frames the world's reactions to them, and when the strange little advantages and inconveniences of that body begin to show themselves in play. It should not replace the character's Archetype, skills, choices, or personality.

Mechanically, Kin entries in this book use **One-on-One RPG** terms throughout. If a Kin grants toughness, it does so in the language of Armor. If it sharpens an Attribute, it does so through the established Attribute scale. If it improves a skill, it provides a direct skill bonus. If it enhances the Creep's supernatural reserve, it affects Essence in clear terms. Narrative benefits remain narrative where that is the cleaner and more flavorful choice. A Creep who glows, squeaks when startled, leaves muddy tracks, crackles with static, or smells faintly of swamp-water does not need a cumbersome subsystem to justify being memorable.

When recording Kin, note all four parts of the entry clearly:

- **Physical Form**, which defines the inherited look and body-shape of the Creep
- **Special Trait**, which grants the Kin's distinctive inherited quirk or gift
- **Drawback**, which gives the Kin its inconvenience, complication, or frailty
- **Mechanical Adjustment**, which applies the entry's direct rules effect

This first choice sets the tone for everything that follows. A sleek little ruin-runner with dim, watchful eyes will grow differently from a broad-snouted little bruiser built like a damp grudge. A porcelain doll-body with clever hands suggests one life. A bramble-fisted gutter thing with a stare like a coal spark suggests another. Let Kin establish the silhouette. The next steps will decide what the silhouette can do.

Step 1a: Determine Inherent Creep Traits

If Kin is inherited shape, **Inherent Creep Traits** are the personal oddities that make one member of that line unlike all the others.

Two Creeps of the same Kin may resemble one another in broad form and family resemblance, yet still be wildly different in the strange little details that matter most once trouble begins. One may leave no sound while moving. Another may cling to surfaces, spit sparks, see too much in the dark, give off the scent of rain, carry hidden pockets in impossible folds of skin, or blur at the edges in a way that makes everyone just slightly uncomfortable. These traits are the marks of a particular fate, an unusual development, a magical quirk, or an inherited anomaly that settled specifically on this Creep and made itself at home.

To determine Inherent Traits, first roll **1d6** to see how many the character possesses:

- On a roll of **1–3**, the Creep begins with **1 Inherent Trait**
- On a roll of **4–5**, the Creep begins with **2 Inherent Traits**
- On a roll of **6**, the Creep begins with **3 Inherent Traits**

After determining the number of traits, roll on the **Inherent Creep Traits Table** once for each result gained, unless the Creepmaster allows selection instead.

These traits range from small physical quirks and useful talents to brief magical bursts, sensory gifts, unusual bodily adaptations, and stranger expressions of Creep nature. Lower results tend to be minor but flavorful. Mid-range traits often provide practical utility, mobility, defense, or sensory benefits. High-end results are rarer and more dramatic, granting short bursts of supernatural force, peculiar movement, dreamlike disruptions, momentary distortions, or other manifestations that make the character feel just a little closer to the edges of the setting.

Like Kin, Inherent Traits should enrich the character rather than replace them. A trait can make a Creep unforgettable. It should not do all the work on its own. The point is not to build a walking stack of disconnected tricks. The point is to create a coherent little being whose oddities feel like part of the same haunted whole.

When multiple traits overlap, let them create texture. A dim little wall-clinger with padded feet and a blink-step feels like a specific creature. So does a stout marsh-born nuisance with a spark-bite, a whistle in the dark, and a bad habit of tracking mud onto sacred floors. The chapter works best when the player leans into that identity rather than trying to sand it flat.

Step 2: Choose Archetype

Once the player knows what the Creep **is**, the next step is to decide what the Creep **does**.

This is the role of **Archetype**.

Archetype represents the character's practical place in the world and in the story. It is the difference between a body and a life. Kin may determine how a Creep appears, but Archetype determines what habits that Creep learned, what sort of problems they are used to handling, what part they play when danger rises, and what kind of usefulness they bring to a scene besides merely being difficult to kill.

Some Creeps are lurkers, scouts, and rooftop rats who prefer not to be where the danger thinks they are. Some are brawlers, bruisers, and stubborn little wrecking creatures who solve problems by remaining standing after everyone else has made peace with lying down. Some are tinkerers, meddlers, alchemists, hedge-workers, and practical minds with deeply impractical interests. Some are talkers, charmers, liars, comforters, or silver-tongued nuisances who can negotiate with anything that speaks and several things that should not. Some lean into patrol work, salvage, occult expertise, or survival in places where survival has the social status of a bad joke.

Archetype gives the Creep shape beyond bloodline. It tells the player what the character trained at, what role they naturally fill, and what kind of scenes should make them shine. It also provides the first set of trained skills during the skill-selection step that follows later in the chapter.

The player should choose the Archetype that best fits the intended concept, not merely the one that appears most obviously efficient. Efficiency matters. So does identity. A character whose Kin, Traits, and Archetype all point in the same direction will feel clean and focused. A character whose pieces pull against one

another may feel more eccentric, surprising, or difficult. Both can be excellent. The important thing is that the combination feels deliberate once it is on the page.

Step 3: Generate Primary Attributes

A Creep's **Primary Attributes** define the broad foundations of capability before training, specialization, and improvised heroics begin to build on top of them.

CREEPS! uses the six core Attributes of the **One-on-One RPG** system:

- **Might (MGT)**
- **Grace (GRC)**
- **Endurance (END)**
- **Awareness (AWR)**
- **Intellect (INT)**
- **Presence (PRE)**

These six Attributes describe the Creep at their most basic level: how hard they hit, how deftly they move, how long they endure, how sharply they perceive, how well they think, and how strongly they exert themselves on the world around them.

A player may generate these Attributes using one of two methods.

Classic Method: Standard Array

Assign the following values across the six Attributes in any order:

70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45

This method is fast, reliable, and difficult to misuse. It suits players who want a solid, capable character without pausing too long over exact calibration.

Point Allocation Method

Distribute **345 points** among the six Attributes, observing the following limits:

- **Minimum 40** in any one Attribute at character creation
- **Maximum 80** in any one Attribute at character creation

This method gives the player more control and allows finer shaping of the character's strengths and weaknesses, but it should still produce a Creep who feels grounded in the same overall scale as the rest of the game.

Each Attribute should be understood as follows:

Might (MGT)

Might measures raw force, leverage, muscle, bodily impact, and physical authority. It governs lifting, hauling, breaking, forcing, striking, and any moment in which the Creep attempts to impose themselves on a stubborn world by being stronger than the obstacle in front of them. A Creep with high Might can drag companions, shoulder open rotted doors, grapple with ugly things, push through resistance, and remind the environment that size is not always the same as fragility.

Grace (GRC)

Grace governs balance, agility, coordination, timing, precision, reflex, and fine control of movement. It is the Attribute behind quick-footed evasions, careful landings, nimble theft, rooftop sprints, narrow escapes, and all the little miracles of body control that separate a stylish recovery from a humiliating fall into a barrel. Creeps with high Grace move like they distrust gravity and have made plans accordingly.

Endurance (END)

Endurance reflects resilience, toughness, stamina, pain tolerance, recovery, and the ability to keep going after comfort, dignity, and common sense have all abandoned the effort. It matters in resisting harm, surviving strain, enduring hostile conditions, pressing through exhaustion, and remaining functional when a weaker soul would already be making funeral arrangements. High Endurance does not make a Creep invulnerable. It merely makes the world work harder for the privilege.

Awareness (AWR)

Awareness measures alertness, perception, environmental reading, intuition, vigilance, and the talent for noticing what others miss. It governs sight, hearing, instinct, and the subtle interpretation of danger. It is the Attribute that tells a Creep the floor is wrong, the silence is wrong, the shadow behind the crate is wrong, or the smiling thing in the doorway is wrong in a very specific and actionable way. High Awareness keeps a Creep alive not by making the world kinder, but by making its intentions harder to hide.

Intellect (INT)

Intellect covers reasoning, memory, deduction, technical understanding, study, puzzle-solving, and the disciplined handling of information. It supports scholarship, crafting, analysis, lore, planning, diagnosis, and the deeply questionable impulse to understand occult systems well enough to interfere with them. A Creep with high Intellect may not always make wise decisions, but they will at least understand the quality of their mistakes.

Presence (PRE)

Presence is force of personality, confidence, poise, charm, menace, emotional projection, and that difficult-to-measure quality that makes other beings react when the Creep enters a scene. It governs persuasion, deception, command, performance, intimidation, and the ability to hold social ground in a dangerous world full of things that respond to certainty, fear, or force of self. In **CREEPS!**, Presence also has a direct connection to Essence, making it especially important for characters who lean toward strange arts, dream-work, or occult influence.

When assigning Attributes, the player should think not only about competence, but about attitude. A Creep with high Grace and high Awareness feels different from one with high Might and high Presence, even before skills are selected. The sheet should already be hinting at who this little creature is when trouble begins.

Step 4: Derive Essence

Once **Presence** has been assigned, the player determines the Creep's **Essence Maximum**.

Essence Maximum = Presence ÷ 2, rounded up

Record this value clearly on the character sheet. Unless another rule says otherwise, the Creep begins play with current Essence equal to their maximum.

Essence is the inner reserve from which the stranger powers of the setting draw. It is not merely stamina and not simply spirit, though it contains something of both. It represents the Creep's capacity to carry and channel the uncanny. It is what allows a being already born odd to become actively dangerous in more interesting ways.

For some characters, Essence will remain mostly in the background until later developments in play draw it forward. For others—especially those connected to Sorcery, Dreamcraft, occult interference, or inherited weirdness with a sharper edge—it may become central

from the very beginning. Either way, it belongs on the sheet early and clearly.

A strong Presence creates a deeper well of Essence, which means a Creep does not need to look imposing to be spiritually potent. Some of the most dangerous things in this setting could be mistaken, at a glance, for decorative clutter in a child's room. The wise learn to look twice.

Step 5: Select Skills and Set Skill Bases

Skills determine what the Creep has learned to do with their natural capabilities.

In **One-on-One RPG**, each skill begins with a **base value** derived from its linked Attribute:

Skill Base = linked Attribute ÷ 2, rounded down

This means that raw capability matters, but training matters too. A naturally sharp, agile, or forceful Creep begins with a stronger foundation in the skills tied to those Attributes, but no one becomes truly dependable at difficult tasks without deliberate investment.

At this step, the player first notes the **6 skills granted by Archetype**. These represent the character's role-based training and the practical abilities most closely associated with their way of life.

After that, the player chooses **10 additional skills**.

Finally, the player gains a number of **bonus skills** based on Intellect:

- **INT 01–40**: +1 bonus skill
- **INT 41–60**: +2 bonus skills
- **INT 61–80**: +3 bonus skills
- **INT 81–100**: +4 bonus skills

These bonus skills reflect range of learning, quick study, breadth of curiosity, adaptable intelligence, and the tendency of clever little beings to pick up things they were absolutely not supposed to learn.

A Creep's skill list should feel like the map of a life. Archetype explains the strongest road through that life, but the additional selections are often where the character begins to feel personal. A stealthy patrol-runner might also know alchemy because they have spent too long around smoke-vials and improvised remedies. A charming little liar might have practical salvage skills because they learned early that words open some doors and pry-bars open the rest. A brutish shell-backed nuisance might know more lore than anyone expects, because someone has to remember the old stories after everyone more respectable has been eaten.

Skill selection is not only about optimization. It is about coherence, versatility, and identity. Choose skills that make the Creep feel capable in their intended role, but also choose enough breadth that they remain interesting once the story pushes them outside that comfort.

Step 6: Distribute Skill Points

After selecting skills and noting their base values, the player distributes **200 Skill Points** among those chosen skills.

Each point invested increases a skill by **+1%**.

This stage represents practice, refinement, experience before play, and the difference between mere exposure and actual competency. The skill base tells you where the Creep starts naturally. Skill points tell you where they have put real time, real effort, real mistakes, and perhaps real blood.

To preserve growth and keep early play sharp, tense, and satisfying, the recommended starting cap is as follows:

No skill may begin above 70% after point allocation unless the Creepmaster explicitly permits it for character-concept reasons.

This cap is important. A starting Creep should feel good at the things they are meant to be good at, but not so complete that the campaign has nowhere left to take them. **CREEPS!** is built for narrow victories, costly competence, escalating weirdness, and the pleasure of becoming more dangerous over time. Starting too high flattens that arc.

When distributing points, the player should strengthen the skills that define the Creep's role first, then shore up the secondary skills that keep that role functional in play. A scout benefits from stealth, movement, awareness, and enough practical survival to avoid becoming a cautionary tale. A bruiser needs combat competence, resilience, and at least a little utility beyond hitting things until the problem changes shape. A sorcerous meddler needs more than occult ability; they also need enough practical sense to survive the consequences of understanding what they are tampering with.

By the end of this step, the player should be able to look at the skill list and see not just numbers, but habits.

Step 7: Establish Destiny

All Protagonists in **CREEPS!** begin play with **3 Destiny**.

Destiny is one of the beating hearts of the **One-on-One RPG** system. It is what the player spends when a moment matters too much to leave entirely to the cruelty of chance. It is luck, nerve, timing, narrative insistence, and that sharp little refusal inside a character that says, *No. Not like this.*

A Creep with Destiny is not protected from danger. They are simply harder to drag quietly into failure. That distinction matters. The setting remains perilous. Harm remains real. Loss remains possible. Destiny does not remove those truths. It gives the player a limited ability to push back when the scene tightens and the consequences begin to bare their teeth.

Record **3 Destiny** on the character sheet.

Step 8: Starting Gear and Money

Every Creep begins play with gear and money appropriate to their Archetype and the campaign's starting assumptions.

Equipment in **CREEPS!** should never feel like decorative accounting. It should suggest the Creep's habits, profession, and level of preparedness. A patched satchel, a pry tool, a coil of line, a hooded lantern, a rusting blade, a pouch of ingredients, a bundle of salvage, a spare bandage roll, a suspicious key, an ugly charm, a notebook full of terrible ideas—these things tell the player and the table what kind of creature this is before the first test is ever rolled.

Starting money should be enough to make choice matter, but scarce enough that the world still feels mean. This is not a setting built on comfort. Characters should begin equipped to function, not cushioned against consequence. Need should remain close enough to touch.

When recording gear, clarity matters. The player should know what the Creep carries, what is worn, what is tucked away, what is readily accessible, and what has obvious story value. Many campaigns are shaped as much by a single useful tool carried at the right time as by any abstract number on the sheet.

Step 9: Companion Setup

Companions are an important part of **One-on-One RPG** play, and **CREEPS!** keeps that structure.

A Creep's Companion is not an afterthought. It is not a decorative pet, idle luggage, or a sentimental flourish

pasted onto the sheet after the serious work is done. A Companion is a living part of the character's story. It creates contrast, support, vulnerability, humor, and emotional texture. In a game built around intimate, focused play, that matters enormously.

The Companion may be a confidant, helper, burden, witness, emotional anchor, practical assistant, bonded beast, or troublesome little soul whose loyalty outpaces its judgment. Sometimes the Companion reveals what the Creep is like at their best. Sometimes it reveals what the Creep is like when someone smaller, weaker, or more trusting depends on them. Sometimes it exists to complicate scenes in all the right ways. Ideally, it does all three.

Create a Companion according to the standard **One-on-One RPG** rules and any **CREEPS!**-specific guidance elsewhere in this book or select a pre-generated one from the Companion chapter.

If the character's Kin or concept includes a bonded creature or unusual relationship, apply that here. **Binder-Kin still have a Companion, along with their bonded pet**.

The Companion should feel specific. A grim little survivor accompanied by a bright, needy creature creates one kind of story. A talkative menace with a silent, practical companion creates another. A reckless dream-haunted nuisance with a beast that has far better instincts than its master creates a third, and often a memorable one.

Step 10: Final Checklist

Before play begins, review the completed character sheet carefully.

Make sure the following are fully recorded:

- Kin, including physical form, special trait, drawback, and mechanical adjustment
- Inherent Creep Traits
- Archetype
- All six Primary Attributes
- Essence Maximum
- Selected skills and their base values
- Distributed skill points
- Starting Destiny
- Starting gear and money
- Companion details

Also confirm that any special rules granted by Kin or Inherent Traits are written plainly enough to be used at the table without delay. If the Creep can flatten themselves beneath a narrow gap, cling to a wet wall, give off light, emit sparks, ignore mud, blink a short distance, resist a specific hazard, or deliver a minor natural attack, that effect should appear on the character sheet in clear language rather than being hidden in a paragraph somewhere else.

A finished Creep should feel alive at a glance. The player should be able to look at the sheet and immediately understand what the Creep looks like, what the Creep is good at, what the Creep carries, what makes the Creep unusual, and what sort of danger will probably find them first.

That is enough to begin.

The rest, as always, will get worse.

Wilson

LINEAGE: KIN TABLE

Before a Creep learns a trade, chooses an Archetype, pockets a knife, or makes the sort of promise they will later regret, there is the simple and deeply important question of what sort of little being they are. That question is answered by **Kin**.

Kin is bloodline, body-shape, inherited oddity, and family resemblance wrapped into one. It determines the Creep's physical form, grants one innate trait of that lineage, imposes one drawback, and provides one direct rules benefit. In practice, Kin is the first thing other creatures notice and often the last thing they forget. Some Creeps look as though they were stitched together from bark, soot, fungus, soft toy stuffing, broken stone, moth-dust, or moonlit bad ideas. Others seem almost charming at first glance, which is often the more dangerous option. A Creep's Kin is the first layer of their identity, the thing that gives them shape before choice and experience begin carving deeper lines into them. The full Kin table is a 1d100 spread of lineage results, each built from physical form, special trait, drawback, and mechanical benefit.

A player may roll **1d100** to determine Kin or select a result that best suits the character concept. Rolling invites surprise, oddity, and the occasional deeply inconvenient gift. Selection allows for a more deliberate shape. Both are perfectly valid. What matters is that once chosen, the Kin should feel present in play. It should affect description, mood, roleplay, and the kind of trouble the Creep tends to attract. A body made of crystal, bramble, slime, or soft plush ought to matter. A glow that cannot quite be hidden ought to matter. A shell, a set of horns, a lantern-lit ribcage, or a voice like whispering leaves ought to matter. Kin is not a minor cosmetic note. It is the first true fact of the character.

1d100 Kin Table

01 — Wisplet
Physical: Small, translucent, airy outline.
Special Trait: Can slip through cracks at least 2 inches wide once per rest.
Drawback: Loud noises briefly disperse the outline.
Rules: +10 Grace

02 — Tangle-Sprite
Physical: Vine-hair, leaf-skin, soft rustling body.
Special Trait: Glows faint green under moonlight.
Drawback: Fire is especially dangerous to this Kin.
Rules: +10 Stealth

03 — Buttonfuzz
Physical: Plush toy-like body, soft squeaks.
Special Trait: Humans often mistake the Creep for a toy until it moves.
Drawback: Squeaks when startled.
Rules: +10 Presence

04 — Marbleling
Physical: Smooth stone body with glowing cracks.
Special Trait: May roll up to 10 feet as part of

movement.
Drawback: Extremely heavy for size.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

05 — Gnarlkin
Physical: Bark-skin, knotted joints.
Special Trait: Small friendly bugs often live in the bark; gain Advantage on fitting in with small natural creatures or reading simple signs of the wild where appropriate.
Drawback: Slow and stiff when first rising.
Rules: +10 Endurance

06 — Grinlet
Physical: Huge glowing grin, long-toothed smile.
Special Trait: The smile sheds dim light.
Drawback: The mouth-glow is nearly impossible to conceal in darkness.
Rules: +10 Presence

07 — Mothling
Physical: Soft wings, antennae, oversized eyes.
Special Trait: Detects magical disturbances within 5 feet.
Drawback: Fascinated by bright lights.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

08 — Dapplekin
Physical: Speckled fur and stone-like mottling suited to caves and rocky places.
Special Trait: Blends naturally into rocky terrain.
Drawback: The camouflage is of little use in bright, open light.
Rules: +10 Stealth

09 — Flickerfoot
Physical: Legs blur when sprinting.
Special Trait: May make a sudden burst of extra movement once per rest.
Drawback: Skittish under pressure.
Rules: +10 Grace

10 — Glimmercap
Physical: Mushroom-headed, softly glowing cap.
Special Trait: Emits calming spores that ease fear and agitation in roleplay.
Drawback: The glow spoils concealment.
Rules: +10 Presence

11 — Skitterback
Physical: Insectoid limbs, chitinous plates.
Special Trait: Climbs walls at half speed.
Drawback: Chitin scrapes loudly on stone.
Rules: +10 Grace

12 — Spriteling
Physical: Big ears, wide eyes, light agile form.
Special Trait: Can compress the body to fit very small gaps.
Drawback: Delicate frame.
Rules: +10 Stealth

13 — Ragcoat
Physical: Patchwork textures stitched across the body.
Special Trait: Stitches rearrange themselves during sleep.
Drawback: Many find this Kin uncanny.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

14 — Fizzbit
Physical: Static-charged fur crackling with tiny sparks.
Special Trait: Can harmlessly shock small objects.
Drawback: Delicate equipment and fragile mechanisms do not appreciate close contact.
Rules: +10 Grace

15 — Clotpelt
Physical: Mud-thick, heavy body.
Special Trait: Hard to shove or bowl over.
Drawback: Leaves muddy tracks.
Rules: +10 Endurance

16 — Peppet
Physical: Wooden or ceramic doll-like form.
Special Trait: Can be repaired with proper craft tools.
Drawback: Falls are particularly unkind to this body.
Rules: +10 Intellect

17 — Rooklet
Physical: Birdlike fluff, tiny beak.
Special Trait: Hears whispers at surprising distance.
Drawback: Inclined toward huffy pride.
Rules: +10 on hearing-based Awareness tests

18 — Liltshade
Physical: Shadowy body with blurred edges.
Special Trait: Can dim the outline for a round.
Drawback: Unnaturally cold to the touch.
Rules: +10 Stealth

19 — Pebblegut
Physical: Round belly, stone-heavy limbs.
Special Trait: Can curl into a tight defensive ball.
Drawback: Slow to regain footing once toppled.
Rules: +10 Might

20 — Neonip
Physical: Bright multicolored glowing stripes.
Special Trait: Radiates dim light in a small radius.
Drawback: Very poor at hiding in darkness.
Rules: +10 Presence

21 — Dimblin
Physical: Lantern-light glowing inside the chest cavity.
Special Trait: The light can brighten or dim at will.
Drawback: Visible in darkness unless carefully concealed.
Rules: +10 Intellect

22 — Tattermug
Physical: Cracked, dented, worn-looking face or silhouette.
Special Trait: Hard to rattle with fear.
Drawback: Looks perpetually tired and battered.
Rules: +10 Endurance

23 — Snootle
Physical: Long snout, curly fur.
Special Trait: Can track by scent.
Drawback: Loud, obvious sniffing.
Rules: +10 on scent-based tracking tests

24 — Pipsnap
Physical: Short, neat, tidy little features.
Special Trait: Naturally polite and disarming.
Drawback: Timid under strain.
Rules: +10 Presence

25 — Thornjack
Physical: Covered in small cactus-like spines.
Special Trait: Creatures that strike bare-handed or bodily in close contact take 1 damage.
Drawback: Accidentally pokes allies and companions.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

26 — Rootmender
Physical: Pale green skin with rune-like vines over the arms.
Special Trait: Can coax wilted plants to perk up.
Drawback: Sensitive to cold.
Rules: +10 Intellect

27 — Scrabblet
Physical: Large hands, long digging nails, shaggy fur.
Special Trait: Can burrow slowly through soft soil.
Drawback: Nails click loudly on stone floors.
Rules: +10 Might

28 — Blinkfawn
Physical: Tiny deer-like body, pale fur, wide reflective eyes.
Special Trait: Reacts instantly to surprise.
Drawback: Skittish under pressure.
Rules: +10 Grace

29 — Chalkunt
Physical: Chalky, brittle stone body that sheds dust.
Special Trait: Leaves faint chalk marks on touched walls and floors.
Drawback: Produces a visible dust trail.
Rules: +10 Intellect

30 — Murmurling
Physical: Constant muttering in odd unknown tongues, faint astral hum.
Special Trait: Can understand fragments of ancient magical dialects.
Drawback: The whispering can betray position.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

31 — Dampfoot
Physical: Moist amphibian skin, webbed toes, mossy scent.
Special Trait: Can cling to wet walls and climb them at half speed.
Drawback: Suffers badly in dry heat.
Rules: +10 Swim

32 — Wimble
Physical: Short, thick-set body with a low center of gravity.
Special Trait: Very difficult to topple.
Drawback: Poor sprinter.
Rules: +10 Endurance

33 — Embernip
Physical: Warm charcoal skin with ember-like freckles.
Special Trait: Can light small objects on fire with a touch.
Drawback: Water-dampening effects are especially troublesome.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

34 — Rimpler
Physical: Rubber-like, squishy, extremely flexible body.
Special Trait: Can squeeze through any gap the head can fit through.
Drawback: Bounces embarrassingly when falling.
Rules: +10 Grace

35 — Tinkerfuzz
Physical: Metallic fur, ticking joints, wiry whiskers.
Special Trait: Instantly notices obvious mechanical faults.
Drawback: Whirring sounds betray the Creep's presence.
Rules: +10 on Craft or Engineering tests

36 — Curlpaw
Physical: Small, fuzzy, kitten-like posture and curled tail.
Special Trait: Often underestimated at first glance.
Drawback: Easily frightened by loud roars or monstrous outbursts.
Rules: +10 Presence

37 — Shardling
Physical: Body made of chiming crystal fragments.
Special Trait: Emits faint prismatic glints in darkness.
Drawback: Light refraction ruins stealth.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

38 — Frillkin
Physical: Reptilian frill, darting eyes, quick tongue.
Special Trait: Can sense vibrations through the ground.
Drawback: The frill snaps open loudly when startled.
Rules: +10 on vibration- or notice-based Awareness tests

39 — Mudmop
Physical: Thick shaggy coat forever dropping mud and dust.
Special Trait: Hard to shove and difficult to slip.
Drawback: Leaves obvious traces behind.
Rules: +10 Endurance

40 — Glooshade
Physical: Gelatinous shadow-body with distorted light around it.
Special Trait: Can flatten into a sheet roughly an inch thick once per rest.
Drawback: Fire causes particular misery.
Rules: +10 Stealth

41 — Gnubble
Physical: Round, sturdy, stubborn-looking body.
Special Trait: Digs in heels with remarkable force.
Drawback: Plodding movement.
Rules: +10 Might

42 — Waddlehop
Physical: Long arms, tiny legs, waddling gait with sudden leaps.
Special Trait: Can jump surprisingly high for size.
Drawback: Extremely poor runner.
Rules: +10 Grace

43 — Rumblepod
Physical: Rotund body that gently vibrates, deep booming voice.
Special Trait: Can emit a harmless rumble to alert allies.
Drawback: Poor in stealth.
Rules: +10 Endurance

44 — Paletwig
Physical: Pale, twig-like limbs and narrow shoulders.
Special Trait: Moves silently on dry floors.
Drawback: Looks terribly fragile.
Rules: +10 Stealth

45 — Brambler
Physical: Thorned vine-body, creeping bark plates.
Special Trait: Can entangle small unattended items in its vines.
Drawback: Frequently snags on gear and clothing.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

46 — Puddlenip
Physical: Gooey, soft, dripping body.
Special Trait: Can slowly squish under doors or bars.
Drawback: Held equipment may slip from its grasp.
Rules: +10 Endurance

47 — Tocklet
Physical: Tiny gears in the joints, faint ticking with each step.
Special Trait: Always knows the approximate time.
Drawback: Ticking can be heard in quiet places.
Rules: +10 Intellect

48 — Snoutspike
Physical: Porcupine-like quills across the back and arms.
Special Trait: Creatures that strike in close bodily contact take 1 damage.
Drawback: Comfort is not this Kin's strong suit.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

49 — Curlcat
Physical: Soft fur, whiskers, curling tail, feline silhouette.
Special Trait: Can see in near-total darkness.
Drawback: Distracted by moving lights.
Rules: +10 Grace

50 — Marshbit
Physical: Bog-mud coated, damp amphibious body.
Special Trait: Ignores difficult terrain caused by mud or shallow water.
Drawback: Constant dampness ruins papers and delicate dry goods.
Rules: +10 Endurance

51 — Broadmuzzle
Physical: Thick jaws, heavy cheekbones, broad snout.
Special Trait: Can crack nuts, brittle stone, and similar objects with the jaws.
Drawback: Loud chewing carries.
Rules: +10 Might

52 — Grumple
Physical: Permanently scowling, squat, coarse features.
Special Trait: Naturally intimidating.
Drawback: Warm social scenes begin poorly.
Rules: +10 Endurance

53 — Prawlkin
Physical: Low, athletic, panther-like posture.
Special Trait: Can sprint on all fours for short bursts.
Drawback: Prone to reflexive pouncing in tense moments.
Rules: +10 Grace

54 — Shellback
Physical: Smooth plated shell across spine and shoulders.
Special Trait: Can withdraw into the shell as a full action.
Drawback: Turns slowly.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

55 — Craggle
Physical: Jagged rocky protrusions and gritty hide.
Special Trait: Resists environmental abrasion and scraping hazards.
Drawback: Leaves little gravel trails.
Rules: +10 Endurance

56 — Bogsnout
Physical: Bulbous nose, amphibian-smooth skin, swampy smell.
Special Trait: Can sniff out faint magical residue.
Drawback: Loud snorting is inevitable.
Rules: +10 on tracking magical traces

57 — Drubblin
Physical: Heavy-limbed, broad-shouldered, clumsy gait.
Special Trait: Can shoulder through light barriers and flimsy obstacles.
Drawback: Trips over clutter.
Rules: +10 Might

58 — Basinback
Physical: Barrel-chested body, broad torso, big lungs.
Special Trait: Can hold breath for an unusually long time.
Drawback: Wheezes loudly when exhausted.
Rules: +10 Endurance

59 — Bramblehorn
Physical: Small curled horns, compact ram-like posture.
Special Trait: Can deliver a horned headbutt that deals 1 damage.
Drawback: Inclined to ram when startled.
Rules: +10 Might

60 — Mosscoat
Physical: Thick mossy fur, damp and springy.
Special Trait: Blends naturally into vegetation.
Drawback: Constantly moist.
Rules: +10 Stealth

61 — Gnarhoof
Physical: Hooved feet, broad stance, heavy lower body.
Special Trait: Can deliver a harmless but startling ground-stomp.
Drawback: Hooves echo loudly on stone.
Rules: +10 Might

62 — Slateback
Physical: Slate-like stone plates across back and limbs.
Special Trait: Resistant to chips and cuts.

Drawback: Heavy body, poor jumper.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

63 — Ironwool
Physical: Thick metallic fur with a scraping undertone.
Special Trait: Throws sparks when rubbed against stone.
Drawback: Hard to move quietly.
Rules: +10 Endurance

64 — Torchjaw
Physical: Glowing molten mouth and inner cheeks.
Special Trait: Can light torches with a warm exhale.
Drawback: Breath always smells of smoke.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

65 — Bulkroot
Physical: Large plant-humanoid with root-like limbs.
Special Trait: Very stable in soft ground.
Drawback: Low flexibility.
Rules: +10 Might

66 — Bogmaw
Physical: Huge frog-like mouth.
Special Trait: Natural grappler.
Drawback: Loud gulping.
Rules: +10 Endurance

67 — Lumberpaw
Physical: Huge paws, bear-like gait, low rumbling growl.
Special Trait: Can produce a fearsome roar.
Drawback: May intimidate friendly creatures unintentionally.
Rules: +10 Might

68 — Flintback
Physical: Flint-like carapace that sparks when struck.
Special Trait: Resistant to slashing and scraping harm.
Drawback: Sparks reveal position in darkness.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

69 — Drover
Physical: Tall for a Creep, long limbs, lean strength.
Special Trait: Extended reach for handling and poking objects.
Drawback: Suffers badly in tight tunnels.
Rules: +10 Might

70 — Snagjaw
Physical: Massive jaws with snaggled teeth.
Special Trait: Can bite accurately even in darkness.
Drawback: Deep growl carries.
Rules: +10 Presence on intimidation tests

71 — Boulderkin
Physical: Huge boulder-like body, ponderously slow.
Special Trait: Can brace and become almost impossible to shift.
Drawback: Very slow movement.
Rules: +10 Endurance

72 — Maulback
Physical: Broad shoulders, oversized arms, slouching bulk.
Special Trait: Can carry twice the usual load.
Drawback: Clumsy in tight spaces.
Rules: +10 Might

73 — Thudhorn
Physical: Heavy headplate, thick skull.
Special Trait: Can charge or headbutt for 1 damage.
Drawback: Helmets, hats, and hoods fit poorly.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

74 — Ironclasp
Physical: Cold, rigid, metal-like exterior.
Special Trait: Naturally resistant to mundane corrosion.
Drawback: Extremely heavy.
Rules: +10 Endurance

75 — Grindpaw
Physical: Massive hands built for crushing.
Special Trait: Can break fragile objects and weak

barriers by force.
Drawback: Tends to crush delicate things by accident.
Rules: +10 Might

76 — Bulkmaw
Physical: Massive torso, heavy jaws, oversized teeth.
Special Trait: Can carry large items in the mouth without harm.
Drawback: Chews loudly under any circumstance.
Rules: +10 Might

77 — Drumspine
Physical: Spiked ridge along the spine that rattles like a drum.
Special Trait: Can create a warning rattle that carries.
Drawback: Rattles involuntarily when frightened.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

78 — Grudgehorn
Physical: Horned brow ridge, stern heavy skull.
Special Trait: Braces well against charges and impacts.
Drawback: Horns snag on low ceilings and awkward overhangs.
Rules: +10 Endurance

79 — Direcap
Physical: Heavy mushroom-like cap that sheds faint spores.
Special Trait: Can puff harmless spores when hit.
Drawback: Spores leave a scent trail.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

80 — Emberjaw
Physical: Mouth of ember-like teeth, warm smoky breath.
Special Trait: Can ignite small objects with a hot exhale.
Drawback: Constant smell of smoke reveals proximity.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

81 — Grumblehulk
Physical: Towering for a Creep, boulder-heavy limbs.
Special Trait: Emits floor-shaking growls.
Drawback: Often intimidates allies without meaning to.
Rules: +10 Might

82 — Bramblefist
Physical: Hands wrapped in knotted thorn-vines.
Special Trait: Thorny unarmed blows are particularly nasty to behold.
Drawback: Cannot wear normal gloves comfortably.
Rules: +10 Endurance

83 — Slatebeast
Physical: Slate-armored body that clacks while moving.
Special Trait: Resistant to cuts and chips.
Drawback: Noisy unless moving with care.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

84 — Granitejaw
Physical: Granite-heavy jaw, slow powerful movement.
Special Trait: Can hold objects in the mouth with remarkable steadiness.
Drawback: Slow speech.
Rules: +10 Might

85 — Maulroot
Physical: Massive root-like limbs twisted together.
Special Trait: Can anchor itself to earth surfaces.
Drawback: Slow to unroot once settled.
Rules: +10 Endurance

86 — Pyrefang
Physical: Fanged mouth with a faint heat shimmer.
Special Trait: Can warm others with a gentle breath.
Drawback: Poor tolerance for freezing cold.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

87 — Chasmback
Physical: Deep cavern-like cracks and rugged dorsal ridges.
Special Trait: Blends into rocky walls when

motionless.
Drawback: Sheds chalky dust.
Rules: Natural Armor (AR 1)

88 — Boulderhide
Physical: Body like piled chunks of stone around a core.
Special Trait: Extremely resistant to impacts.
Drawback: Struggles with small doors and cramped spaces.
Rules: +10 Endurance

89 — Trollim
Physical: Small troll-like build, greenish mottled skin, tiny tusks.
Special Trait: Regains additional recovery during a Rest Break when the Creepmaster agrees the circumstances allow it.
Drawback: Sensitive to fire and acid.
Rules: +10 Might

90 — Titanic Creep
Physical: Nearly giant-sized for a Creep, huge-limbed and unmistakable.
Special Trait: Long reach for handling objects at a distance.
Drawback: Extremely conspicuous.
Rules: +10 Might

91 — Worldcrusher
Physical: Compact stone-like body with a faint unnatural heaviness.
Special Trait: Very stable footing; nearly impossible to knock prone.
Drawback: Extremely slow and ponderous.
Rules: +10 Endurance

92 — Forgechild
Physical: Molten glow beneath the skin, faint metallic scent.
Special Trait: Can gently heat metal tools by touch.
Drawback: Wet environments are deeply uncomfortable.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

93 — Thundermaw
Physical: Crackling static aura, tiny lightning arcs.
Special Trait: Can produce harmless sparks and static taps.
Drawback: Crackles audibly when stressed.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

94 — Abysskin
Physical: Body like a shadowed abyss with drifting star-specks.
Special Trait: Can faintly perceive portal energies.
Drawback: Some creatures react with instinctive fear.
Rules: +10 Intellect

95 — Runejaw
Physical: Runic engravings across jaw and torso that glow during magic use.
Special Trait: Can identify magical runes on sight.
Drawback: Runes flash brightly when startled.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

96 — Fathomling
Physical: Deep-sea coloration with drifting bioluminescent dots.
Special Trait: Can breathe underwater for short periods.
Drawback: Vulnerable to dehydration.
Rules: +10 Swim

97 — Astralblight
Physical: Edges shimmer, parts of the body seeming half in the Astral.
Special Trait: Can peer through thin magical veils and curtains of sorcery.
Drawback: The flicker makes ordinary creatures uneasy.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

98 — Starvessel
Physical: Faint radiance within the body, eyes full of

tiny constellations.
Special Trait: Can shed soft star-light in a small radius.
Drawback: Constant glow spoils stealth.
Rules: +10 Intellect

99 — Primordial Creep
Physical: Ancient-seeming body of bone, stone, and clay.
Special Trait: Especially resistant to old curses and ancient malice.
Drawback: Very slow to learn new languages.
Rules: +10 Endurance

100 — Fatebound
Physical: Body flickers through multiple possible forms.
Special Trait: Roll twice on the Inherent Traits table and choose one result. Keep Fatebound and the second Trait as well.
Drawback: Prone to hallucinatory flashes and sensory overlap.
Rules: +5 Essence Maximum

INHERENT CREEP TRAITS

If Kin is what a Creep inherits from the family line, **Inherent Traits** are the stranger little accidents that belong to the individual. These are the odd gifts, physical quirks, unstable blessings, and intimate wrongnesses that make one Creep distinct from another even within the same Kin. Two stone-bodied Creeps may share the same basic lineage, yet one might hear footsteps through walls while the other leaves sparks with every grin. Two shadow-soft little nuisances may both be born to hiding, yet one slips through smoke while the other carries moonlight in its teeth. Inherent Traits are where the setting becomes personal. They are the small impossible details that make a character feel chosen, altered, favored, hexed, or simply built a little differently by the dark. The trait rules begin with a 1d6 roll to determine how many traits a Creep possesses, from one to three, and then use a full 1d100 table of manifestations and effects.

Roll **1d6** to determine how many Inherent Traits the Creep begins with:

- **1–3**: 1 Trait
- **4–5**: 2 Traits
- **6**: 3 Traits

Then roll **1d100** once for each Trait gained. Lower results tend toward minor physical oddities, sensory gifts, and useful little tricks. Mid-range results grow stranger, sharper, and more practically useful. The highest results are rarer and more dramatic, though still local in scale: flashes of elemental harm, brief distortions of movement, dream-born effects, tiny portal tricks, and other signs that the Creep may not be entirely under the management of ordinary reality.

1d100 Inherent Trait Table

01 — Ocular
Manifestation: Possesses additional eyes.
Rules: +10 on sight-based Awareness tests

02 — Windfriend
Manifestation: Possesses a pair (or more) of wings.
Rules: Can fly at standard movement speed.

03 — Clinghair
Manifestation: Body hair or fibers cling to surfaces.
Rules: +10 Climb

04 — Quickflick Nails
Manifestation: Long glossy nails that tap rapidly.
Rules: +10 Sleight of Hand

05 — Glow-Mote
Manifestation: A tiny glowing orb drifts nearby.
Rules: Sheds light like a candle

06 — Taproot Balance
Manifestation: Brief roots sprout from the feet while still.

Rules: +10 on tests to resist being shoved or knocked prone

07 — Trickpocket
Manifestation: Tiny pocket-folds appear in fur or skin.
Rules: Can store up to 3 very small items in hidden body-folds

08 — Dustpuff
Manifestation: A little puff of dust appears on landing.
Rules: +10 on jumping and leaping tests

09 — Soft-Step Pads
Manifestation: Soft padded feet.
Rules: +10 Stealth while moving

10 — Squeak Alarm
Manifestation: A squeak escapes when danger startles the body.
Rules: Once per rest, automatically detect one hidden creature within 10 feet

11 — Blunt Claws
Manifestation: Thick, blunt claws.
Rules: Gain a natural claw attack that deals 1d4 damage

12 — Flickertail
Manifestation: Tail twitches with anticipatory speed.
Rules: Gain Advantage on tests to react first to sudden danger

13 — Vibration Sense
Manifestation: Whiskers tremble in response to movement.
Rules: Sense nearby footsteps through surfaces within 30 feet

14 — Ruin-Whisper
Manifestation: Faint runes rise on the skin near ancient places.
Rules: +10 on lore tests concerning ruins and ancient structures

15 — Cold Nerves
Manifestation: Skin frosts slightly in cold air.
Rules: +10 on tests to resist cold

16 — Heat Mender
Manifestation: Slight inner warmth.
Rules: +10 on tests to resist heat or fire exposure

17 — Cloud-Breath
Manifestation: Breath forms mist even when warm.
Rules: Once per day, create a 5-foot cloud of obscuring vapor; attacks through it usually suffer Disadvantage

18 — Headstrong
Manifestation: Has two heads with differing personalities.
Rules: +10 sight and sound-based Awareness tests

19 — Bright-Eyes
Manifestation: Eyes glow like lantern glass.
Rules: See through magical darkness within 5 feet

20 — Chatterbite
Manifestation: Teeth chatter rapidly.
Rules: +10 on close-range intimidation tests

21 — Sticky Touch
Manifestation: Finger pads turn adhesive.
Rules: Once per rest, cling to a wall or ceiling for 3 rounds

22 — Leapknots
Manifestation: Muscles knot visibly before a jump.
Rules: +10 on jumping and leaping tests

23 — Murk Sense
Manifestation: Eyes glaze over in fog.
Rules: Ignore concealment from mist or fog within 15 feet

24 — Ember Spark
Manifestation: Tiny sparks spit from the fingertips.
Rules: Can light candles, fuses, and similarly small flammables at will

25 — Slime Coat
Manifestation: Thin slick film over the body.
Rules: +10 on tests to escape grapples and restraints

26 — Hound-Ears
Manifestation: Oversized floppy or pointed ears.
Rules: +10 on hearing-based Awareness tests

27 — Muckmender
Manifestation: Mud swirls around the feet.
Rules: Move through mud without penalty

28 — Twirlwhiskers
Manifestation: Whiskers spiral when magic is near.
Rules: Detect active magic within 5 feet

29 — Hollow Bones
Manifestation: Light frame, softly humming bones.
Rules: +10 on Grace-based climbing tests

30 — Tenebrous Pupil
Manifestation: Eyes blacken fully in darkness.
Rules: +10 Stealth in darkness

31 — Bubble Vault
Manifestation: Bubbles appear from the palms while falling.
Rules: Reduce fall harm by 10

32 — Silence Blink
Manifestation: Fingers briefly vanish when snapped.
Rules: Once per rest, move in complete silence for 1 round

33 — Chittercall
Manifestation: A unique tiny chitter impossible to mimic.
Rules: Allies within 20 feet always know your position even if they cannot see you

34 — Mosspatch
Manifestation: Moss grows on shoulders or back.
Rules: +10 Stealth in natural overgrowth

35 — Crystalflick
Manifestation: Small crystals grow and vanish along the arms.
Rules: +10 on tests to identify magical crystals and runes

36 — Tangle-Tongue
Manifestation: Hair-like tendrils act as a tongue.
Rules: Once per day, manipulate a tiny object up to 5 feet away as though using fingers

37 — Echo-Knock
Manifestation: Knocking sounds echo strangely.
Rules: Once per day, tap a wall and detect hollow spaces behind it

38 — Firefly Veins
Manifestation: Veins pulse with soft golden light.
Rules: +10 on tests to search for hidden objects

39 — Gut-Rumble
Manifestation: Belly rumbles cartoonishly.
Rules: Once per day, automatically frighten tiny creatures nearby

40 — Rustlehide
Manifestation: Skin rustles like dry leaves.
Rules: +10 on tests to avoid surprise

41 — Glimmerstride
Manifestation: Feet leave faint prismatic sparkles.
Rules: Once per rest, gain Advantage on one Grace-based test

42 — Carapace Shift
Manifestation: Plates rearrange defensively.
Rules: Once per day, gain AR 2 for 3 rounds

43 — Biteflare
Manifestation: Teeth glow before biting.
Rules: Gain a natural bite attack that deals 1d4 damage

44 — Vaporsprint
Manifestation: Legs blur with trailing mist.
Rules: Once per rest, double movement for 3 rounds

45 — Glowspore Puff
Manifestation: Glowing spores burst out when startled.
Rules: Once per day, create a softly glowing 10-foot cloud that illuminates but provides no direct combat benefit

46 — Darkstep
Manifestation: Shadows cling to the ankles.
Rules: +10 Stealth when moving between shadows

47 — Wriggleform
Manifestation: Ribcage bends unnaturally.
Rules: Can fit through gaps about half normal body width

48 — Nibbleflash
Manifestation: Teeth spark when clicking together.
Rules: Once per day, one natural attack deals +1d4 lightning damage

49 — Trillvoice
Manifestation: Voice vibrates musically.
Rules: +10 on friendly persuasion tests

50 — Burrow Flick
Manifestation: Dirt gathers around the hands.
Rules: Once per rest, burrow 10 feet through loose soil

51 — Soul-Squeak
Manifestation: A ghostly echo repeats the last words spoken.
Rules: Once per rest, gain Advantage on a test to resist fear

52 — Bristleburst
Manifestation: Fur bristles explosively.
Rules: Once per day, adjacent attackers take 1 damage when striking in close bodily contact

53 — Mist-Revise
Manifestation: Mist swirls around the head while thinking.
Rules: Once per rest, gain +10 on one Intellect-based test

54 — Ghost-Step
Manifestation: Feet flicker ghostlike when moving.
Rules: May move through an enemy's space without penalty

55 — Arc-Snap
Manifestation: Small lightning arcs between the fingers.
Rules: Once per day, make a 20-foot ranged zap that deals 1d4 lightning damage

56 — Stonecrack Pulse
Manifestation: Cracks along the limbs glow under strain.
Rules: +10 on tests to break objects by force

57 — Shade-Slip
Manifestation: Skin turns ink-dark in shadow.
Rules: +10 Stealth in total darkness

58 — Moonmask
Manifestation: Face glows silver in moonlight.
Rules: See an additional 20 feet in dim light

59 — Gnarlgrip
Manifestation: Vine-wrapped fingers.
Rules: +10 on grappling tests

60 — Blinktrail
Manifestation: A faint afterimage lingers after movement.
Rules: Once per day, gain Advantage on one defense or evasive movement test

61 — Ember Loop
Manifestation: Fire loops around the arms.
Rules: Once per day, one melee attack deals +1d4 fire damage

62 — Quickpuff Teleport
Manifestation: A puff of smoke replaces the body for an instant.
Rules: Once per day, teleport up to 10 feet

63 — Web-Flick
Manifestation: Fine webbing extrudes from the fingers.
Rules: Can briefly restrain tiny objects or creatures

64 — Crystalline Lens
Manifestation: Eyes take on an inner crystal sheen.
Rules: +10 on tests to spot hidden magical objects

65 — Phantom Reach
Manifestation: Arms stretch slightly too far.
Rules: Can manipulate unattended objects up to 5 feet beyond normal reach

66 — Smolder Veil
Manifestation: Smoke drifts from the shoulders.
Rules: Once per day, surround yourself with a 5-foot smoke screen that grants concealment

67 — Tunnelgrip
Manifestation: Claws stone over when climbing.
Rules: Climb stone walls at half speed

68 — Bolt-Bite
Manifestation: Teeth crackle with energy.
Rules: Once per day, a natural bite attack deals +1d4 lightning damage

69 — Faint-Phase
Manifestation: Edges blur between moments.
Rules: Once per rest, gain +10 on one test to evade a melee attack

70 — Sparkshot
Manifestation: Fingers pop with sparks.
Rules: Once per day, make a 20-foot ranged spark attack that deals 1 lightning damage

71 — Knotted Strength
Manifestation: Muscles twist into rope-like cords.
Rules: +10 on lifting, pushing, and hauling tests

72 — Rift-Sense
Manifestation: Eyes glow purple near portals.
Rules: Detect portals within 20 feet

73 — Echo-Step
Manifestation: Footsteps echo strangely ahead of the body.
Rules: Once per day, move silently for 1 round

74 — Void-Latch
Manifestation: Hands become pitch-black void-shapes.
Rules: Can grasp an insubstantial or ghostly object for 1 action

75 — Frostbite Breath
Manifestation: Breath forms icy crystals.
Rules: Once per day, exhale a 10-foot cone that deals 1 cold damage

76 — Mech-Twitch
Manifestation: Metallic rhythm pulses beneath the skin.
Rules: +10 on Craft or Engineering tests

77 — Tangleburst
Manifestation: Vines lash out from the fists.
Rules: Once per day, restrain one target for 1 round unless it succeeds on an appropriate Might or Grace test to break free

78 — Gleamwall
Manifestation: A shimmer forms around the body.
Rules: Once per day, gain AR 1 for 3 rounds

79 — Pulse-Step
Manifestation: Feet emit little shockwaves.
Rules: Once per day, knock Tiny creatures prone within 5 feet

80 — Warp Flicker
Manifestation: Head and outline snap briefly out of place.
Rules: Once per day, teleport up to 10 feet

81 — Shadowburst
Manifestation: Shadows erupt around the torso.
Rules: Once per day, create a 10-foot dim zone for 1 round; attacks against you from within or through it usually suffer Disadvantage

82 — Fireveil
Manifestation: Fire-like motes swirl when anger rises.
Rules: +10 on tests to resist fire

83 — Lightning Reel
Manifestation: Static reels around the body.
Rules: Once per day, a melee attacker takes 1 lightning damage upon striking in close bodily contact

84 — Gravity Hitch
Manifestation: Weight visibly shifts and stutters.
Rules: Once per day, ignore fall harm from 20 feet or less

85 — Moonflare Burst
Manifestation: A sudden moon-bright flash engulfs the body.
Rules: Once per day, one creature within sight must succeed on an appropriate resist test or be blinded for 1 round

86 — Riftstep
Manifestation: A tiny tear opens beneath the foot.
Rules: Once per day, teleport up to 15 feet

87 — Dreamcall
Manifestation: Eyes ripple with dreamstuff.
Rules: Once per day, one creature within short range must resist or fall asleep for 1 round

88 — Ember Cyclone
Manifestation: Sparks spiral around the arms.
Rules: Once per day, release a 5-foot fiery burst that deals 1 fire damage

89 — Shard Nova
Manifestation: Crystal shards spin around the body.
Rules: Once per day, all creatures within 5 feet take 1 piercing damage

90 — Chaos Twist
Manifestation: Body twists with unstable possibility.
Rules: Once per day, reroll any one die roll and keep the second result

91 — Star Drop
Manifestation: A tiny falling star appears in the hand.
Rules: Once per day, throw it up to 20 feet; it deals 1 radiant damage, and the target must resist or be blinded for 1 round

92 — Rift Lock
Manifestation: A portal-eye opens in the palm.
Rules: Once per day, seal a small portal for up to 1 hour, subject to the Creepmaster's judgment of size and force

93 — Astral Leap
Manifestation: The body blurs into an Astral silhouette.
Rules: Once per day, teleport up to 20 feet

94 — Moonbeam Pulse
Manifestation: The face becomes a moonlit mask.
Rules: Once per day, release a 10-foot pulse that imposes Disadvantage on enemy attacks for 1 round

95 — Thunderburst Core
Manifestation: Lightning crackles inside the chest.

Rules: Once per day, release a 10-foot lightning burst that deals 1 damage

96 — Reality Shear
Manifestation: Body-edges turn serrated and wrong.
Rules: Once per day, one melee strike deals 2 damage instead of its normal damage

97 — Starlight Veil
Manifestation: Shimmering stars wrap the body.
Rules: Once per day, gain Advantage on defense and evasive tests for 1 round

98 — Dreamwalk
Manifestation: Feet trail drifting dream-motes.
Rules: Once per day, move through up to 10 feet of enemy-occupied space without penalty or interception

99 — Portal Blink
Manifestation: Eyes show swirling gate-patterns.
Rules: Once per day, step through a micro-portal and appear up to 10 feet away

100 — Fate Surge
Manifestation: Body flickers through possible futures.
Rules: Roll two additional Inherent Traits and choose one of them

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BONUS Table(s)!

CREEP NAMES (TRADITIONS, TABLES & FORMS)

Creep names are constructed to be memorable, strange, and often reflective of their Kin traits. Names vary widely but **most Creeps belonging to the same Kin most often share similarities with others of its type**—either in cadence, syllable choice, or tone.

Creep names generally follow one of three structures:

Two-Part Names (Standard Form)

- **Prefix + Suffix**
  Examples:
- *Mibbit Fallow*
- *Grish Tindle*
- *Vexi Morn*
- *Dropple Keen*

Singular Names (Rare, Often Magical Kin)

Examples: *Scree*, *Vona*, *Elru*, *Rish*, *Kallo*

Three-Part Names (Formal or Vigil-Trained)

Examples:

- *Talla Verin Quickfoot*
- *Bmorran Tull of the Third Burrow*
- *Eleri Shadow-Thread Whisper*

CREEP NAME GENERATOR (1d100/2)

Table 1: First Name

01 Vix
02 Pibble
03 Loro
04 Trim
05 Malk
06 Eri
07 Grint
08 Falla
09 Krenn
10 Tivu
11 Soot
12 Kella
13 Minno
14 Rish
15 Thra
16 Spindle
17 Tolly
18 Vesh
19 Pattle
20 Oska
21 Rembi
22 Driv
23 Pruu
24 Latch
25 Vorn
26 Silka
27 Glimm
28 Yaro
29 Vev
30 Noll
31 Frisk
32 Hulla
33 Lint
34 Vrono
35 Thal
36 Emmi
37 Grett
38 Pox
39 Delli
40 Rum
41 Vree
42 Shalla

43 Bim
44 Rist
45 Korro
46 Pellum
47 Vindi
48 Sella
49 Trosh
50 Fiv

Table 2: Second Name

01 Bramblebrow
02 Crookthread
03 Fellwick
04 Mornroot
05 Glimmerkin
06 Nightwisp
07 Softclaw
08 Quickshuffle
09 Ashbarrow
10 Tinderspark
11 Underbloom
12 Webstring
13 Stonebowl
14 Fadewhisper
15 Dampknoll
16 Bristlebend
17 Hollowkin
18 Shardrun
19 Fogspry
20 Understep
21 Fardent
22 Mossmire
23 Rattlecup
24 Brimshade
25 Nearwater
26 Kettlesink
27 Porridgepatch
28 Netterfold
29 Tanglebend
30 Softshackle
31 Embercliff
32 Gloomreach
33 Stitchburr
34 Driftlatch
35 Smoldercap
36 Vineslough
37 Witherweft
38 Undercoil
39 Dustwarren
40 Starshutter
41 Nibblequill
42 Deepbriar
43 Quietfist
44 Tenebrill
45 Coldknot
46 Clatterhook
47 Fallowbind
48 Farsmoke
49 Wetmarsh
50 Narrowhollow

CHAPTER 2: ARCHETYPES OF THE VIGIL

Not every Creep serves Limbo in the same way.

That simple truth matters more than it first appears. **CREEPS!** is a game about odd little guardians standing between the ordinary life of Limbo and the hidden pressures that keep trying to tear holes in it: Dream Portals, unstable thresholds, wandering Trespassers, Truants from the Human World, old district secrets, astral leakages, black-market exchanges, bad decisions with ritual tools, and the long, humiliating truth that many disasters begin with somebody insisting everything is under control. In such a world, competence cannot be generic for long. A city of fungal lanes, dim canals, secret routes, lantern towers, broken seal-frames, and half-forgotten corridors needs specialists. The Vigil survives because its members do not all look at the same problem and see the same answer.

That is what an archetype represents.

An archetype is not merely a job title, though most of them are jobs. It is not merely a bundle of starting proficiencies, though it grants those. It is the shape of a Creep's early usefulness: the way they were trained, the kinds of tasks placed in their hands before the campaign begins, the corners of Limbo where they learned to become competent, and the particular sort of authority or suspicion they carry when others look at them. A Warden of the Passages and a Dastard may both wear a Vigil badge, but no one mistakes one for the other after five minutes in the same room. A Portal Engineer does not think like a Tracker. An Enchanter does not approach danger like an Operative. A Night Schooler may know truths that a seasoned patrol veteran has never been taught to ask aloud. Each archetype implies not only a skill set, but a relationship to the setting.

This is especially important in **CREEPS!** because Limbo is not an abstract adventure space. It is a functioning society, or as close to one as a lantern-lit realm of hidden doors, dream residue, canal fog, fungal economies, and organized threshold maintenance can reasonably become. It has labor. It has institutions. It has official training, unofficial training, tolerated vice, highly untolerated vice, district pride, inherited warnings, old scandals, and the constant administrative strain of trying to keep ordinary life possible in a place where the walls occasionally remember things they should not. The Vigil sits in the middle of that strain. It is guardian order, response force, engineering bureau, occult archive, quarantine authority, salvage service, child-protection nightmare, and public inconvenience all at once. Archetypes express the fact that no single kind of Creep could possibly perform all of those functions equally well.

Some archetypes are visibly prestigious. Some are quietly essential. Some are publicly respectable and privately resented. Some are tolerated because they

get results nobody else can get. Some are treated with admiration by district families and with quiet dread by bureaucrats who have had to read their reports. These social meanings matter. A Creep's archetype influences how other Vigil members respond to them, what kind of work they are expected to volunteer for, what assumptions people make about their reliability, and what sorts of failure are considered shameful. If an Operative hesitates, it is noticed. If a Portal Engineer misjudges a frame, people may die. If a Dastard is too honest, someone will wonder why. If a Night Schooler cannot explain the old symbol on the wall, then perhaps the old symbol on the wall is much worse than everyone hoped.

Archetypes also help define the internal culture of the Vigil. Officially, all members are guardians of Limbo and responders to portal-related danger. In practice, the Vigil is an ecosystem of overlapping specialties, rival temperaments, and unequal reputations. Wardens often think in terms of routes, gates, and stability. Trackers think in signs, crossings, and follow-through. Enchanters worry about magical contamination and technical precision. Artificers worry about whether the shutters, lanterns, braces, and field tools are going to hold together long enough to matter. Binder-Kin attend to the subtle instincts of companions and familiar things that react before the room itself explains why. Scryers of Limbo and Night Schoolers live half a step deeper into the unsettling realization that history, dream, ritual, and dimensional pressure are never truly gone just because the paperwork says "contained." All of these are ways of serving the same institution. All of them produce different kinds of heroes, nuisances, martyrs, and professionals.

Mechanically, an archetype provides a starting package of training. Each archetype grants six automatically gained skills. These are not "recommended" talents or soft suggestions; they are the core competencies the Creep already possesses by virtue of their training and role. They reflect formal instruction, field exposure, organizational habit, and expected proficiency. From there, the player builds outward through additional skill choices during character creation. This is important, because no archetype is meant to imprison character identity. A Tracker may also be deeply scholarly. A Warden may be unexpectedly gifted at Performance. A Night Schooler may be far more practical than academic. An Enchanter may have spent enough time in black-market districts to become quietly dangerous in entirely nonmagical ways. Archetype provides foundation, not destiny.

That distinction matters especially in the One-on-One conversion because solo play thrives on specificity. A single Protagonist cannot simply be "useful in general." They need a clear lane of competence, a recognizable method of solving problems, and an immediate relationship to the world. An Operative in a one-on-one campaign does not merely fight better; they carry the emotional role of the one who steps forward when the breach widens. A Portal Engineer does not merely know technical things; they become the person who can read whether the room is about to fail. A Binder-Kin brings not only skill but companionship, responsiveness, and a field presence shaped by another living thing. Archetypes help the Creepmaster understand what kind of scenes to frame, what kinds of NPCs to connect, what types of complications feel personal, and what sort of stories this particular Creep is likely to generate just by doing their job.

At the same time, archetypes remain just as important in Group Mode. A patrol of three or four Creeps becomes more vivid when each member clearly occupies a different professional posture toward the world. The Tracker follows. The Dastard gets in. The

Warden holds. The Engineer stabilizes. The Scryer interprets. The Night Schooler remembers what the old text warned about. The Operative strikes. This division of labor is not merely tactical; it is tonal. It makes the Vigil feel like an organization full of trained, mutually dependent little guardians rather than a collection of interchangeable adventurers carrying lanterns and unresolved anxieties.

Socially, the archetypes also suggest the kind of life each Creep had before the campaign opens. Some roles imply formal schooling. Others imply apprenticeship, district-born adaptation, inherited habits, illicit associations, field-hardening, or deeply inconvenient practical experience. A Night Schooler has attended nocturnal academies, studied under lamp-light, memorized dangerous names, and learned secrets the district common rooms may not know. A Dastard has likely spent time where official authority travels poorly. A Warden has stood in a place long enough for civilians to recognize the silhouette. An Artificer has spent hours arguing with broken objects and then called it productive labor. These backgrounds are not full biographies, but they point toward them. They tell the player, the Creepmaster, and the setting itself what kind of life this Creep has already lived.

One more thing must be understood clearly: no archetype is morally pure.

The Vigil is a necessary institution in a difficult realm, but "necessary" does not mean simple. Operatives may become too eager for force. Enchanters may grow too comfortable with dangerous magical shortcuts. Dastards may spend too much time deciding that procedure is for other people. Scryers may drift into fatalism. Night Schoolers may become attached to knowledge over people. Wardens may confuse route stability with justice. Portal Engineers may begin to see communities as systems instead of homes. Binder-Kin may trust their companions more easily than other Creeps. Trackers may become more comfortable following than speaking. Artificers may improve things past the point of wisdom. These are not faults every character must have, but they are pressures attached to the work. A book-ready archetype chapter should not pretend otherwise. These are roles inside a haunted civic machine. Their strengths are inseparable from the burdens they create.

For that reason, the best way to read the archetypes is not as ranks on a power ladder, but as promises of story. If you choose Operative, the game promises hard lines, visible danger, and moments where someone must act first. If you choose Portal Engineer, it promises failing systems, impossible maintenance, and the particular terror of realizing the breach is structurally wrong. If you choose Binder-Kin, it promises companionship, instinct, subtle warning, and the bond between guardian and familiar thing. If you choose Night Schooler, it promises secrets, old records, occult education, and the creeping realization that Limbo has been keeping more history than most people can comfortably bear. If you choose Dastard, it promises routes no one talks about in daylight, useful lies, unsanctioned methods, and the practical truth that the city's underside often knows the surface's business first.

All members of the Vigil are guardians. Archetypes simply answer the more useful question: guardians in what way?

Using Archetypes in Play

Each archetype provides:

- A detailed role description
- Core skills
- Starting gear
- Pay Rate
- Money in Pocket

These core skills represent professional baseline competence and/or specific training fields. They are learned through field work, institutional expectation, apprenticeship, formal training, or the kind of necessity that becomes indistinguishable from education after enough bad nights. During character creation, these archetype skills are added before the player chooses their additional starting skills.

Archetypes do not prevent later growth. A Dastard can become a capable scholar. A Night Schooler can harden into a Warden-like presence. A Tracker can become dangerously good at Dreamcraft. These entries describe where the Creep begins, not where they are confined.

BINDER-KIN

Binder-Kin are guardians whose training is shaped around relationship: with bound creatures, familiars, tethered oddities, sympathetic spirits, or living companion-beings that work beside them in the field. In a setting like **CREEPS!**, where small guardians often survive by knowing more, sensing earlier, and not being alone in the wrong room, the Binder-Kin fills a singular role. They are not simply keepers of pets. They are handlers of sacred, strange, loyal, dangerous, or emotionally resonant partnerships that extend a Creep's reach into the unseen edges of Limbo.

The exact form of the bond differs from Binder-Kin to Binder-Kin. Some keep tiny owl-beasts, glowrats, fuzzbats, rook-kits, ember mites, or thorn-spiders. Others work with stranger companion-things whose habits are only partly understood and whose loyalty is a mixture of training, sympathy, and deeper magical affinity. What matters is that the relationship is meaningful, functional, and cultivated. A Binder-Kin's companion may scout, warn, comfort, retrieve, distract, or simply remain present in the ways that keep a Creep from losing their nerve in dream-haunted silence.

Within the Vigil, Binder-Kin are often valued as specialists in subtle field control, unnatural instinct, and sensitive response. They read a room through more than their own senses. They are also among the first to notice that something is wrong before anyone can articulate what "wrong" means in the moment. Some Binder-Kin are gentle, intuitive, almost pastoral in their field manner. Others are sharp-eyed pragmatists who treat the bond as a serious discipline and resent anyone who reduces it to sentimentality. Either way, a Binder-Kin patrol member is often the first to notice the strange thing and the last to insist it was probably nothing.

There is also something quietly unnerving about them to many ordinary Vigil members. Creeps who work too closely with familiar things, odd creatures, or softly magical companions are sometimes perceived as being one degree more comfortable with the uncanny than is strictly healthy. This is unfair, often inaccurate, and occasionally completely true.

Starting Skills:
- Animal Handling
- Danger Sense
- Dreamcraft
- Insight
- Lore: Creatures & Beasts
- Vigil Procedures

Binder-Kin begin play with a bonded companion. Roll 1d10 or choose.

1d10	Bonded Companion
1	Tiny Owl-Beast
2	Pocket Dragon
3	Fuzzbat
4	Pebble Golem
5	Mushroom Puff
6	Glowrat
7	Mini-Wyrm
8	Thorn-Spider
9	Rook-Kit
10	Ember Mite

Bonded Companion Descriptions

Tiny Owl-Beast
A palm-sized owl with too many soft, blinking eyes and a hooting whisper like rustling pages. It perches on horns, hoods, beams, or weapon hafts and often notices movement before its Binder does.

Pocket Dragon
A lizard-sized dragonet that curls up in satchels, sleeves, or coat pockets and lets out tiny puffs of smoke when irritated. Fiercely possessive of shiny objects and far more judgmental than its size suggests.

Fuzzbat
A round little cloud of fur and bat wings with bright eyes and tiny fangs. It sleeps upside-down in rafters, hoods, or hanging straps and squeaks furiously whenever lies or danger gather nearby.

Pebble Golem
A wobbling little body of smooth stones and stubborn animation. It rearranges its own shape when thinking and taps warning rhythms against floors, pipes, or walls.

Mushroom Puff
A squat, bouncy fungus-creature with a spotted cap, sleepy eyes, and a gentle bioluminescent glow. It releases harmless puffs of colored spores when startled, pleased, or dramatically overpraised.

Glowrat
A long-tailed rat with translucent flesh and softly glowing bones. Curious, quick, and annoyingly good at vanishing into drain gaps only to return from impossible angles.

Mini-Wyrm
A thin, coiling reptilian creature with tiny claws and a fluttering frill. It often wraps around an arm, staff, or shoulder and hisses at strange magic before others notice it.

Thorn-Spider
A spindly little spider with thornlike legs and fine silk threads that catch both dust and secrets. It is excellent at perching unnoticed and leaving small, precise webs where warnings are needed.

Rook-Kit
A strange cross between a kitten and a rook, with soft dark feathers, clever eyes, and an irritating gift for taking things it considers insufficiently guarded. It can mimic short sounds and often develops strong opinions about visitors.

Ember Mite
A thumb-sized beetle-like creature with a coal-dark shell shot through with ember-red cracks. Warm to the touch and prone to little sparks when excited, alarmed, or smug.

Starting Gear:
Light patrol wear, animal or familiar harness kit, feed pouch, whistle or call charm, travel wrap, small blade, lantern, companion satchel or perch fittings, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 5 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d6 Grey Pebbles

DASTARD

The Dastard is the Vigil's quiet hand, sly route-finder, pocket-lifter, infiltrator, discreet watcher, and sanctioned practitioner of methods better left unexplained in front of district elders. Dastards are not merely thieves, though many possess thiefly instincts; nor are they merely spies, though they are often treated as such by everyone except themselves. A Dastard is trained to go where formal authority causes doors to close, to observe what others miss, and to move useful things—including information—from one place to another without leaving a trail thick enough for a fool to follow.

Within patrol work, a Dastard's value becomes obvious very quickly. They open the hatch, lift the key, hear the rumor first, check the second route, follow the suspect, plant the token, vanish into the market crowd, and come back with the answer everyone else was too straightforward to get. Some Dastards are playful, theatrical, and faintly unbearable. Others are intensely practical professionals who take insult at being romanticized by people who have never had to pass through three inspection points carrying a living contraband problem in a sack.

Dastards also occupy an awkward social space within the Vigil. Everyone uses their skills. Not everyone likes

being reminded that those skills are necessary. As a result, many Dastards are intimately familiar with hypocrisy, unofficial arrangements, and the distinct sound of someone saying “this is irregular” while quietly accepting the results. In many patrols, the Dastard is trusted deeply in the field and politely mistrusted at mealtime.

They are often the ones who know which route is really safe, which merchant is lying, which black-market broker is salvageable, and which locked door exists specifically because someone hoped a Dastard would not find it. That hope rarely lasts.

Starting Skills:
- Black Market Etiquette
- Deception
- Lockpicking
- Sleight of Hand
- Smuggling
- Stealth

Starting Gear:
Shadow-Weave Vest or equivalent light patrol wear, Thorn Dagger, lock tools, hooded lantern or glowstick bundle, hidden pockets, wire, chalk, common disguise pieces, standard Vigil badge carried but not always displayed.

Pay Rate: 4 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 2d6 Grey Pebbles

ENCHANTER

The Enchanter is a trained magical technician: part sorcerer, part ward-worker, part applied theorist, and part professional nuisance to anyone who thinks magic should remain abstract. Enchanters do not merely cast spells in moments of crisis; they are also the people who understand how magical force settles into objects, thresholds, tools, spaces, and prepared structures. In a society like Limbo, where warding, seal-work, dream contamination, relic maintenance, and field enchantment all matter, that makes the Enchanter an exceptionally valuable specialist.

Some Enchanters are solemn practitioners of difficult and dangerous traditions, proud of their careful method and suspicious of sloppy hands around magical objects. Others are bright-eyed experimentalists who are forever trying to make their work more elegant, more portable, or only slightly less volatile this time. Their presence in a patrol often changes the shape of a mission: locked objects become opportunities, strange artifacts become questions instead of hazards, and hostile magical environments become things to read and manipulate rather than merely survive.

Yet Enchanters also walk close to one of Limbo's enduring risks: confidence. Because they can often do what others cannot, they may be tempted to reach too quickly for a magical solution. Good Enchanters survive by learning discipline, patience, and the deeply useful habit of not touching glowing things until they know whether the glow is conversational or homicidal.

Within the Vigil, Enchanters are simultaneously relied upon and blamed in advance. If a magical problem is solved, they were expected. If it gets worse, someone will look at them first. This has made many of them dry, defensive, and intolerably correct.

Starting Skills:
- Concentration
- Lore: Arcane
- Runes & Glyphs
- Scholar
- Sorcery
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Padded Jacket, rune stylus, small charm case, prepared focus object, chalk set, lantern, ritual cloth, short blade or wand-rod, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 8 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d4 Blue Pebbles

LIMBO ARTIFICER

The Limbo Artificer is maker, tinkerer, fixer, field-inventor, and enthusiastic mechanical meddler in the service of the Vigil. Where Engineers keep systems working and Enchanters manage magical force, Artificers live in the more chaotic middle ground where practical construction, clever improvisation, salvage, small machines, eccentric tools, and tactical problem-solving all meet. In a civilization like Limbo, where old infrastructure, scavenged technology, magical residue, and handcrafted necessity are constantly forced into the same sentence, Artificers are both a blessing and a liability.

The best of them produce elegant solutions to ugly problems: reinforced shutters, modified lantern rigs, grapple lines, signal devices, protective housings, quick braces, improvised breaching tools, collapsible frames, and clever little items that save patrols from otherwise terminal inconvenience. The worst of them produce all of that plus avoidable smoke. Artificers are often inventive to the point of nuisance, fascinated by salvage, and perpetually one half-step away from turning every field incident into a workshop test case. That said, most patrols are still relieved when one is present.

Within the Vigil, Artificers are valued because they solve physical problems quickly and concretely. They can keep a district functioning, a patrol equipped, or a bad situation survivable with tools, salvage, and unreasonable confidence. They are also the archetype most likely to improve something that was working perfectly well and then spend three days proving that the explosion was, technically speaking, an upgrade issue rather than a design flaw.

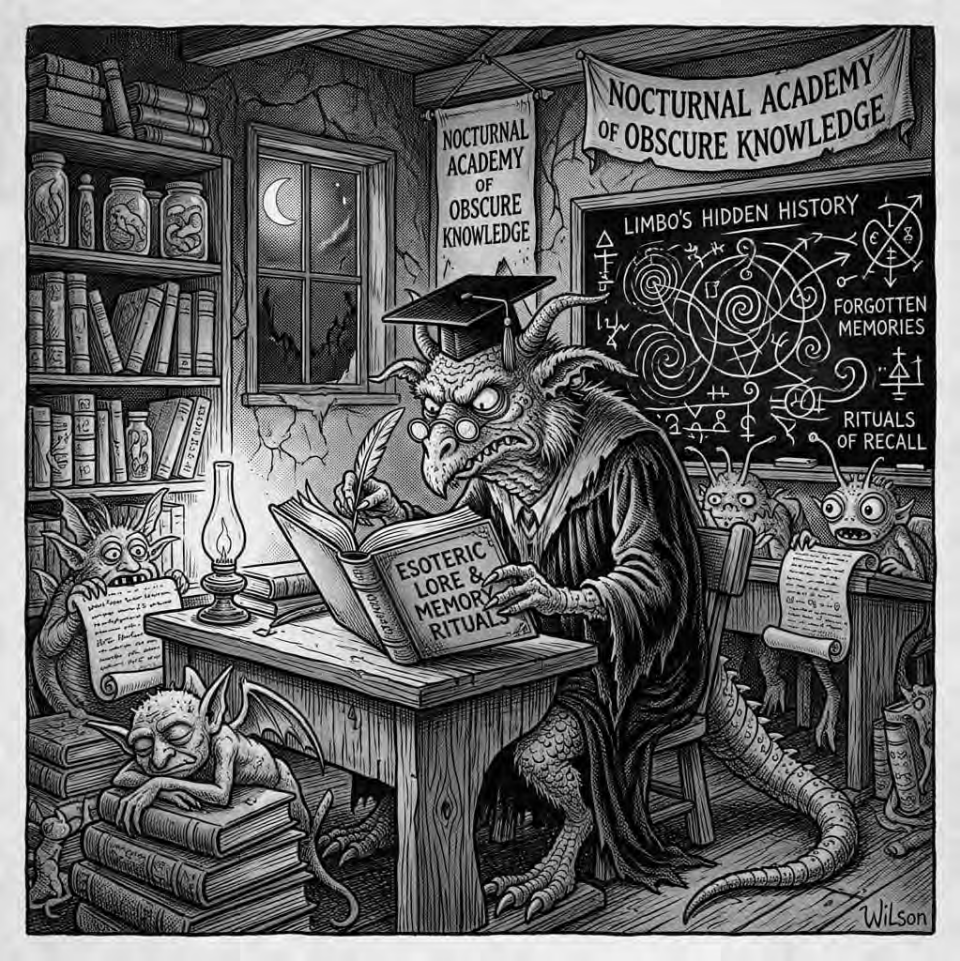
Their workshops are often part laboratory, part junk shrine, part civic utility hub, and part argument with the laws of maintenance. They are loved best from a slight distance.

Starting Skills:
- Alchemy
- Crafting: Simple
- Crafting: Smithing
- Crafting: Wood/Leather
- Engineering
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Light or padded work jacket, tool belt, small hammer, pliers, wire, chalk, portable lamp, repair kit, one chosen crafted utility item, short defensive weapon, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 8 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d4 Blue Pebbles

NIGHT SCHOOLER



Night Schoolers are products of Limbo's nocturnal academies: strange, lamp-lit institutions where Creeps are trained in esoteric lore, memory rituals, coded history, magical disciplines, symbolic reasoning, and the hidden truths that ordinary district life is often happier not discussing in public. These schools do not resemble comfortable daytime education in the Human World. They are part academy, part archive, part supervised initiation into the awkward fact that Limbo is older, stranger, and more layered than most citizens are ever encouraged to realize. A Night Schooler is a Creep whose early training was shaped not merely by patrol need, but by deliberate contact with the intellectual, mystical, and historical secrets of the realm.

For this reason, Night Schoolers often enter Vigil service with a different posture toward danger than more practical field archetypes. They may not be the toughest members of a patrol, nor the most street-seasoned, but they are very often the first to recognize a pattern, identify an old symbol, remember a buried warning, or realize that the current problem is actually repeating something that should have stayed in the archives. They are the Creeps who studied half-forgotten seal forms, recited mnemonic chains under

moonlamps, learned the approved version of district history and then the unsettling footnotes beneath it, and were taught that some doors are dangerous not because they open, but because someone once took the trouble to hide their names.

Within the Vigil, Night Schoolers often fill the role of junior scholars, ritual assistants, researchers, archive-trained support specialists, and field learners whose value rises sharply once an incident becomes stranger than average. Some are eager and book-bright, thrilled to prove that all those dreadful lectures matter in the real world. Others are tired, watchful, over-educated in deeply inconvenient subjects, and already aware that most senior officials prefer problems that do not require quoting old texts in front of civilians. Either way, a Night Schooler comes into the campaign already touched by Limbo's deeper memory.

Their greatest strength is not simple intelligence. It is trained context. A Night Schooler knows that symbols have lineage, rituals have precedent, dreams leave structure, and history has habits. In many patrols, they are the ones who say, "I have read about this," and for once that sentence is not reassuring.

Starting Skills:
- Investigation
- Lore: Ancient Texts
- Lore: Limbo History
- Scholar
- Sorcery
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Student coat or light patrol wear, satchel, books and note-rolls, chalk, lantern, simple defensive weapon, writing kit, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 6 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d4 Blue Pebbles

OPERATIVE

The Operative is the Vigil's direct hand: the patrol specialist sent where a thing must be confronted, breached, dragged down, blocked, or struck before it reaches softer targets. Operatives are not merely fighters, though outsiders often mistake them for exactly that. A true Operative is trained to function in Limbo's real conditions: low ceilings, poor footing, panicked crowds, hostile architecture, partial visibility, uncertain targets, and the ever-present fact that whatever is trying to eat you may have come through the wall instead of the door. They are expected to hold the line when the room becomes ugly.

Within the Vigil, Operatives are often the public face of visible authority. They escort engineers, protect children, push into unstable sites first, and absorb the kind of danger that would kill someone softer or less trained. Some are blunt, steady guardians who take pride in being where the breach breaks. Others are hard-eyed professionals with a reputation for ending trouble before other patrol members even finish identifying it. Either way, an Operative is trusted to act decisively in scenes where hesitation invites blood.

There is a particular emotional burden to the role. Operatives are often the ones who must decide that talking is over. They are also the ones who stand in

front of civilians, fellow Creeps, or frightened Night Schoolers and make themselves look broader than they feel. An Operative may be brave, dutiful, grim, or merely too experienced to indulge panic. But when the passage opens and everyone else steps back, the Operative steps forward.

They are, in many ways, the Vigil made visible: not the whole institution, but the part that refuses to let a threat pass simply because it is unpleasant.

Starting Skills:
- Athletics
- Blades
- Brawling
- Shields
- Tactics
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Padded Jacket, Creep-Sword, Wooden Buckler, Thorn Dagger, Rope (25 ft), Chalk Stick bundle, Lantern, standard Vigil badge and patrol satchel.

Pay Rate: 6 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d6 Blue Pebbles

PORTAL ENGINEER

Portal Engineers are the caretakers of thresholds, the mechanics of impossible geometry, and the professionals most likely to look at a humming rip in reality and mutter that someone has improperly tensioned the frame. They are among the most indispensable members of the Vigil, because no amount of courage will stabilize a dying passage if no one present understands seals, anchors, dampeners, tuning rhythms, threshold stress, or the practical mood swings of breached architecture. When everyone else sees a portal, the Engineer sees a system—failing, flaring, binding, warping, or still barely salvageable.

Their work is intensely technical but never purely academic. Portal Engineers work in the field amid noise, smoke, panic, and active magical threat. They crawl beneath frames, reinforce anchors, read fracture signs, improvise braces, argue with local crews, and make decisions that determine whether a district suffers a manageable Alert or a widening disaster. Some are patient and methodical, the sort of person who labels everything twice and trusts almost no one's measurements. Others are improvisational geniuses held together by wire, caffeine, and an increasingly alarming confidence in emergency fixes.

Within the Vigil, Engineers often inspire a particular kind of respect: the respect given to people whose work everyone depends on and almost no one fully understands. They are called in late, blamed early, and thanked badly. Yet every patrol knows that when a threshold starts to scream, the Engineer is suddenly the most important creature in the room.

They also learn, perhaps more sharply than anyone else, that Limbo's greatest dangers are not always monstrous. Sometimes they are structural.

Starting Skills:
- Engineering
- Investigation
- Portal Detection
- Portal Engineering
- Runes & Glyphs
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Padded Jacket, tool harness, engineer's satchel, chalk and seal stylus kit, repair hammer, lantern, coil of line, small brace wedges, diagnostic mirror, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 7 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d4 Blue Pebbles

SCRYER OF LIMBO

The Scryer of Limbo serves the Vigil as watcher, interpreter, and occult sensor of patterns that do not announce themselves politely. Scryers are those trained to read signs beyond the obvious: astral pressure, layered resonance, dream residue, old magical echoes, repeating symbolic anomalies, and the strange moods of places where Limbo has begun behaving as though it would prefer to become someone else. They are not merely mystics, though mysticism often attaches itself to them whether invited or not. A Scryer is a working specialist in hidden significance.

In active patrol use, a Scryer is often the one who identifies what a phenomenon means before anyone else can even agree on what it is. They determine whether a room is haunted, dream-touched, astrally contaminated, ritually primed, or merely cursed in a local and irritating way. They advise Engineers, support Enchanters, warn Operatives, calm Binder-Kin, and occasionally terrify everyone nearby by saying entirely accurate things in a very quiet voice. Some Scryers are composed scholars of the unseen. Others are half-frayed sensitives whose nerves remain useful by being perpetually one breath ahead of everyone else's.

The role carries weight. To perceive deeper structure is often to see danger first and beauty second. Scryers may be deeply respected, gently avoided, or both. In many patrols, they serve as the voice of what this really is, which is useful until the truth becomes unpleasant enough that no one wishes to hear it.

Their education is often less standardized than it sounds. Some come from formal instruction, some from guided sensitivity, and some from surviving the wrong exposure and then being put to work with the consequences. All of them know that Limbo speaks in echoes before it speaks in declarations.

Starting Skills:
- Astral Lore
- Dream Echo
- Lore: Arcane
- Lore: Dimensions
- Portal Detection
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Light ritual cloak or patrol robe, focus charm, note-rolls, chalk, scrying lens or mirror-disc, lantern, symbol case, short blade, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 7 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d4 Blue Pebbles

TRACKER

Trackers are the path-readers and pursuit specialists of the Vigil: hunters of movement, readers of sign, district-followers, spoor scholars, and the professionals most likely to crouch over three marks in wet dust and announce that the target is limping, angry, carrying iron, and trying much too hard to look clever. In a place like Limbo, where routes shift, panic scatters evidence, and some threats are gone long before an official report finishes being copied, Trackers are often the difference between incident occurred and incident resolved.

A Tracker lives between the wild and the urban. One day they may be following a Goblin thief through the Lower Warrens, the next reading claw marks near a fungal grove, the next tracing dream-tainted footprints in the Closetways after a frightened child vanished through a bedroom threshold. Good Trackers understand that ground speaks differently in different districts. They also know that living things rarely move without telling on themselves somehow. The trick is learning which signs matter.

The Vigil prizes Trackers because so many of its problems run. Not every Alert can be solved where it starts. Someone must follow the trail into canal fog,

old service pipes, ruined streets, or half-lit caves where the thing you are following may already know you are there. A Tracker survives by respecting both sign and silence.

Many of them also learn the practical use of traps, not because they are cruel, but because in Limbo the safest answer to a pursuing thing is often to make the route answer for you.

Starting Skills:
- Forage
- Lore: Creatures & Beasts
- Navigation
- Survival
- Tracking
- Trapmaking

Starting Gear:
Padded Jacket, patrol knife, short bow or sling, chalk, rope, foraging pouch, water skin, trail markers, lantern, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 6 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d6 Blue Pebbles

WARDEN OF THE PASSAGES

Wardens of the Passages are the door-holders, threshold-keepers, corridor-fighters, watch-post defenders, and public-facing bastions of the Vigil. If the Operative is the force sent to strike trouble, the Warden is the one who stands where trouble is expected to arrive and makes that fact as inconvenient as possible. They are trained for defense, containment, escort, breach-holding, and the ugly practical work of keeping a route open for others. In Limbo, where one screaming child or one failed shutter can become a district-level problem, that role is not glamorous—it is essential.

Wardens are often heavily associated with specific passages, bridgeheads, closet thresholds, district gates, stairwells, and known problem routes. They know the shape of bottlenecks, the feel of a crowd about to break, and the practical value of a shield wall in a world where many things are smaller than expected until the teeth appear. Some Wardens are disciplined public servants who regard their route as a sacred trust. Others are gruff territorial professionals who speak about their corridor with the tone other people reserve for family estates or haunted grudges.

Within the Vigil, Wardens are often admired by civilians because they look like what protection is supposed to look like: present, visible, solid, and difficult to move. They are also the people most likely to be blamed when the passage fails, which gives many of them an understandable taste for paperwork, protocol, and the very stern correction of idiots.

If the Vigil has a backbone, it is likely wearing a shield and already knows exactly which route you should not be standing in.

Starting Skills:
- Athletics
- Blunt Weapons
- Intimidation
- Shields
- Tunnel Fighting
- Vigil Procedures

Starting Gear:
Warden Padding or equivalent, shield, blunt weapon or spear, lantern, whistle, chalk, short rope, emergency brace wedges, standard Vigil badge.

Pay Rate: 7 Blue Pebbles/week
Money in Pocket: 1d6 Blue Pebbles

BONUS Table!

PERSONALITY QUIRK TABLE

Optional character flavor, no mechanical effect unless CM chooses.

Roll **1d100** or choose any that suit your Creep.

01–10: QUIRKS OF MOVEMENT

1. Walks on tiptoes everywhere.
2. Floats 1 inch off the ground when excited.
3. Tilts head fully sideways when listening.
4. Moves silently even when not trying.
5. Runs in zigzags instinctively.
6. Climbs furniture instead of using ladders.
7. Always sits cross-legged, even in motion.
8. Stands perfectly still when thinking.
9. Turns whole body instead of just head.
10. Keeps balance in impossible poses.

11–20: QUIRKS OF SPEECH

11. Narrates their own actions under their breath.
12. Speaks in rhythmic cadences, like chants.
13. Frequently whispers secrets to nearby objects.
14. Makes sound effects for everything they do.
15. Laughs at inappropriate moments.
16. Finishes others' sentences incorrectly.
17. Speaks of themself in the third person.
18. Repeats certain words for emphasis... emphasis... emphasis.
19. Cannot whisper—everything is stage volume.
20. Has a faint echo to their voice in dim light.

21–30: QUIRKS OF EMOTION

21. Startles so easily it becomes predictable.
22. Becomes giddy around mushrooms.
23. Gets furious only when someone mispronounces their name.
24. Laughs nervously when scared.
25. Cries dramatically at minor inconveniences.
26. Has no sense of fear until AFTER danger has passed.
27. Gets overly excited about maps.
28. Apologizes constantly.
29. Growls softly when concentrating.
30. Becomes brave only when rescuing others.

31–40: QUIRKS OF BODY

31. Emits sparks when stressed (harmless).
32. Eyes glow when lying.
33. Leaves faint footprints of starlight.
34. Sheds small tufts of fur/skin flakes seasonally.
35. Hair/fur reacts to music.
36. Tiny mushrooms grow when they sleep (cosmetic).
37. Their shadow is "late" following their movements.
38. Breath changes color depending on mood.
39. Makes tiny purring noises when comfortable.
40. Never blinks—or blinks too much.

41–50: QUIRKS OF HABIT

41. Collects shiny stones and arranges them by 'vibes.'
42. Re-builds any stack of items they see.
43. Always checks ceilings before entering rooms.
44. Hides snacks everywhere.
45. Counts by tapping each finger twice.
46. Knocks three times on every door.
47. Only eats food in even-numbered bites.
48. Writes down all dreams, no matter how minor.
49. Talks to their own reflection for advice.
50. Takes notes constantly—even about unimportant things.

51–60: QUIRKS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

51. Stares unblinking until others become uncomfortable.
52. Leans in extremely close to whisper.
53. Compliments others at inappropriate times ("Nice ears—for running!").
54. Mimics others' pose subconsciously.
55. Introduces themselves repeatedly during conversations.
56. Acts like every creature is a potential friend.
57. Avoids eye contact at all costs.
58. Misinterprets sarcasm as deep wisdom.
59. Only understands body language, not tone.
60. Laughs in different 'voices' each time.

61–70: QUIRKS OF CURIOSITY

61. Studies every scratch mark on walls.
62. Collects and categorizes smells.
63. Sniffs new acquaintances like a cat.
64. Obsessed with learning obscure portal facts.
65. Taps magical objects to "see what happens."
66. Asks endless questions about normal everyday things.
67. Talks to portals as if they're living beings.
68. Follows small creatures for hours.
69. Always wants to "borrow" random items.
70. Thinks every mystery has a deeper hidden message.

71–80: QUIRKS OF FEAR

71. Afraid of butterflies, perfectly fine with demons.
72. Nervous around silence.
73. Terrified of puddles but swims fine.
74. Won't step on cracks (dimensional superstition).
75. Convinced shadows whisper about them.
76. Fear of mushrooms taller than themselves.
77. Jumps if someone says their name unexpectedly.
78. Afraid of mirrors (they "watch back").
79. Believes portals can smell fear.
80. Won't turn their back on empty doorways.

81–90: QUIRKS OF MAGIC

81. Magical sparks appear when they sneeze.
82. Can hear faint voices from magical objects.
83. Predicts weather inside Limbo inaccurately but confidently.
84. Magic spells spontaneously rhyme.
85. Smell faintly like herbs when casting spells.
86. Absorbs ambient light when concentrating.
87. Tiny illusions appear when they daydream.
88. Talks during sleep in the language of portals.
89. Attracts small glowing insects.
90. Has prophetic dreams that are never quite correct.

91–100: QUIRKS OF THE UNUSUAL

91. Their reflection sometimes behaves differently.
92. A small invisible friend only they can see.
93. Hums harmonics that vibrate nearby objects.
94. Small objects levitate near them when startled.
95. Leaves frost or heat prints depending on mood.
96. Voice overlaps with a second whispering tone.
97. Shadow forms into different shapes when angry.
98. Appears blurry for a split second after blinking.
99. Can never remember counting higher than "42."
100. Crawls into impossibly small spaces and fits perfectly.

CHAPTER 3: SKILLS OF LIMBO

Skills are the practical language of survival in Limbo. They are what turn a frightened little guardian into a useful member of the Vigil; what separate a tunnel fool from a tunnel expert; what let a Creep calm a panicked child, hear the shift in a sick portal, patch a torn harness, or put a knife through exactly the wrong thing's hand before it finishes climbing through the wardrobe. In a setting like **CREEPS!**, skills matter because the world is too strange, too alive, and too changeable to trust to broad competence alone. It is not enough to be brave. It is not enough to be odd. A Creep must know how to do things.

That is especially true because Limbo is not a stable place in the ordinary sense. It is a world of lantern-lit districts, fungal groves, dripping canals, hidden seams, warped alleys, dream-bent rooms, old stone, older rumors, and breaches that turn yesterday's safe route into tonight's emergency. Even within the guarded structure of the Vigil, no two incidents unfold exactly the same way. A Trespasser Alert in the Lantern Streets does not feel like one in the Closetways. A frightened child is not the same problem as a clever Goblin thief, and a Goblin thief is not the same problem as a dying portal frame, a flooded district, or a room that has begun to remember someone else's nightmare. Skills are what let the Creepmaster and the players distinguish those problems in play, and what let individual Creeps feel different from one another beyond mere temperament.

Mechanically, skills in this chapter follow the broader One-on-One logic: each skill is linked to one core attribute, and is used when that specific kind of trained action matters. But the purpose of the chapter is not merely mathematical. Each skill is also a statement about what kinds of actions the game cares about. The presence of Portal Engineering tells us that thresholds, anchors, and breach-frames matter. Dream Echo tells us that a room can remember fear strongly enough to become evidence. Black Market Etiquette tells us that Limbo is not only a battlefield or haunted fairy sewer, but a living society with vice, trade, reputations, and coded exchanges. Little details like these are what make a setting feel like a place rather than a stage-flat for encounters.

For that reason, these entries are written with both mechanical clarity and setting flavor in mind. Each skill has a linked attribute and tags to clarify where it lives in play, but each also explains what the skill means in **CREEPS!** specifically. A blade-fighter in Limbo is not just "someone with a sword"; they are someone who has learned to cut in stairwells, in fungal alleys, against things that keep moving after they should have stopped. A scholar in Limbo is not just literate; they are someone who has become intimate with contradictory records, partial maps, terrified witness reports, and books that should not be in circulation but

always are. Even the broadest skills should feel rooted in the lived texture of the setting.

You will also notice that some skills are marked Specialist. These are not forbidden, but they are not assumed to be common, casual, or easily acquired. A Specialist skill usually implies one or more of the following: formal Vigil instruction beyond routine field training; mentorship under a hedge-practitioner, archivist, engineer, criminal intermediary, or other unusual teacher; access to rare books, dangerous tools, hidden routes, or restricted traditions; or narrative justification that goes beyond "my character is generally clever." In practical terms, Specialist skills are excellent hooks for downtime, favors, hidden tutors, illicit classes, recovered manuals, and character-specific training arcs. They reward campaigns that linger in the world long enough for a Creep to become more than competent.

Not all uncommon skills are Specialist. That is important. Limbo is already a peculiar place, and if every interesting competency required unusual gating, the setting would begin to flatten instead of deepen. Every member of the Vigil, for example, should reasonably have access to Vigil Procedures and Portal Detection, because those are baseline expectations for functioning guardians in this world. Likewise, a capable patrol Creep may be trained in ordinary Medicine, ordinary Engineering, or even rough Tactics without needing to justify it as if they had uncovered a lost temple syllabus. The Specialist tag exists to mark the rare, the institutionally guarded, the illicit, or the unusually campaign-rich—not merely the sophisticated.

Skills also help define social reality. **CREEPS!** is often funny, but its humor works best when grounded in competence. It is funny that a soot-faced little guardian can scold a Hell-Hound while patching a pipe with fungus rope and shouting citations from Vigil protocol, but it is only satisfying because the setting supports all of those actions as real things someone might know how to do. When a player invests in Animal Handling, that says something about who their Creep is. When another invests in Smuggling, that says something else. If a third invests in Dreamcraft, it tells us that they are not simply magical, but intimate with the emotional and symbolic weirdness at the heart of Limbo. Skills are the first and most reliable bridge between character concept and lived action.

Because **CREEPS!** sits at the crossroads of dark humor, hidden horror, and practical guardianship, many of these skills perform double duty. A social skill may also be used in a crisis. A travel skill may function as an investigation skill when the "path" is a blood trail, dream residue, or old pipe-service map. A combat skill may double as a rescue skill when holding a doorway matters more than winning a duel. This is intentional. Creeps are guardians first, specialists second, and adventurers mostly by unfortunate necessity. A skill chapter for this setting must support direct, useful action in bad conditions, not just textbook examples.

The Creepmaster should read these entries as both mechanical guidance and scenario fuel. If a skill exists, scenarios should occasionally reward it. If no one in the Cohort has Smuggling, then illicit movement should feel riskier. If someone has Black Market Etiquette, the underworld should become more navigable and more specific. If a player invests in Lore: Ancient Texts, old records should contain things worth knowing. If someone develops Dream Echo, the emotional memory of a room should sometimes matter. Nothing dulls a skill list faster than including options the world never meaningfully acknowledges.

Finally, this chapter should be read with the understanding that Creeps are members of the Vigil,

but not identical copies of one another. Some are streetwise, some scholarly, some devoutly procedural, some embarrassing to the uniform, some almost too soft for the work, and some worryingly enthusiastic about parts of the job that should remain morally uncomfortable. Skills are where those differences become visible in play. They are how a Creep solves problems, where they feel at home, what corners of Limbo they understand, and what kinds of stories tend to gather around them. A good skill list does not simply support action resolution. It tells you what the setting thinks a person can become.

Specialist Skills

Some Skills are marked Specialist.

They usually require:

- A specific Archetype, teacher, or institutional access
- Time and narrative justification
- Creepmaster approval at creation if taken early

Specialist Skills are hooks for downtime training arcs, hidden mentors, illicit instruction, recovered manuals, or long study under pressure. They exist to reward campaigns that linger in Limbo rather than one-off patrols.

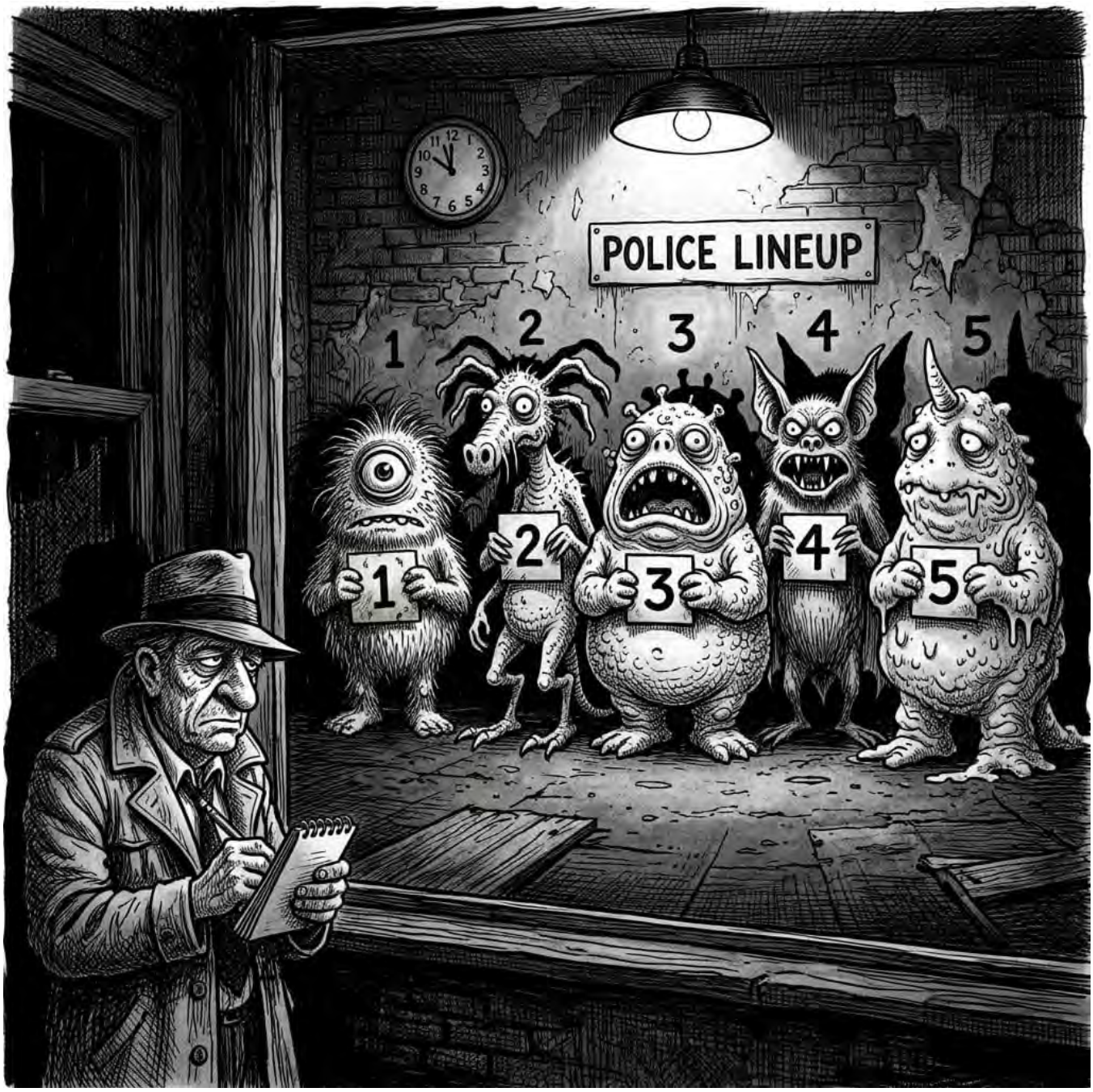
The Specialist Skills in **CREEPS!** are:

- Alchemy
- Astral Lore
- Black Market Etiquette
- Dream Echo
- Dreamcraft
- Lore: Ancient Texts
- Lore: Dimensions
- Portal Engineering
- Runes & Glyphs
- Smuggling
- Sorcery
- Trapmaking

Master Skill List

- Acrobatics
- Alchemy
- Animal Handling
- Archery
- Astral Lore
- Athletics
- Bargain
- Black Market Etiquette
- Blades
- Blunt Weapons
- Brawling
- Concentration
- Crafting: Simple
- Crafting: Smithing
- Crafting: Wood/Leather
- Danger Sense
- Deception
- Dream Echo
- Dreamcraft
- Engineering
- Escape
- Forage

- Herbalism
- Insight
- Intimidation
- Investigation
- Lockpicking
- Lore: Ancient Texts
- Lore: Arcane
- Lore: Creatures & Beasts
- Lore: Dimensions
- Lore: Human
- Lore: Limbo History
- Medicine
- Mimicry
- Natural Attack
- Navigation
- Oratory
- Performance
- Persuasion
- Polearms
- Portal Detection
- Portal Engineering
- Riding
- Runes & Glyphs
- Scholar
- Shields
- Sleight of Hand
- Smuggling
- Sorcery
- Spelunking
- Stealth
- Streetwise
- Survival
- Swim
- Tactics
- Tracking
- Trapmaking
- Tunnel Fighting
- Vigil Procedures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ACROBATICS (Grace) — [Movement, Physical]

Acrobatics is the skill of balance, tumbling, vaulting, controlled falls, swinging movement, and quick bodily adjustment when footing, timing, and precision matter more than raw speed or strength. In **CREEPS!**, Acrobatics is used when a character must cross unstable ground, slip through danger, recover from a bad landing, or keep moving through an environment that is trying to throw them down, break them apart, or leave them hanging in the dark. It is the art of staying in motion when motion itself has become dangerous.

• Keep footing on slick roofs, broken stairs, narrow ledges, swaying bridges, or other unstable surfaces
+10 with steady footing, handholds, or time to move carefully; −20 on crumbling, shifting, or hazardous surfaces

• Roll with a fall, dive through an opening, or turn a hard landing into a controlled recovery
+10 with a clear landing space and room to react; −20 if thrown unexpectedly, landing blind, or crashing into clutter

• Vault over furniture, barricades, gravestones, wreckage, railings, or similar obstacles without losing momentum
+10 when the obstacle is low, solid, and clearly visible; −20 if it is loose, sharp, unstable, or packed among other hazards

• Swing from ropes, chains, pipes, branches, or hanging fixtures to cross gaps or evade immediate danger
+10 when the support is solid and the path is clear; −20 if the anchor looks weak, the gap is awkward, or timing is poor

• Slip through tight openings, collapsing spaces, barred gaps, or shifting hazards with controlled body movement
+10 when the route is visible and measured beforehand; −20 if the passage is jagged, unstable, or must be crossed at speed

• Keep balance and reposition while chased across rooftops, catwalks, rafters, moving debris, or other precarious terrain
+10 with room to move and a visible route ahead; −20 in poor visibility, under pursuit pressure, or when the path may give way beneath you

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ALCHEMY (Intellect) — [Arcane, Craft, Specialist]

Alchemy is the practical chemistry of powders, tinctures, suspensions, smoke-vials, spark compounds, sleeping mixtures, lamp gels, corrosives, and all the bottled bad ideas that become useful if handled correctly. In **CREEPS!**, alchemy lives halfway between hedge craft and dangerous professionalism. It is used by medics, saboteurs, patrol specialists, and anyone who has ever thought "what if the answer came in a sealed jar?" This skill requires precision, patience, and a healthy fear of replacing one problem with a brighter one.

• Brew simple restorative, soothing, clarifying, or preservative compounds
• +10 with a clean workspace and proper formula; −20 with contaminated tools, bad heat, or guesswork

• Create volatile mixtures such as flash powder, smoke, fireburst gel, or irritants
• +10 when measured and prepared in advance; −20 if mixed in the field or under time pressure

• Distill useful reagents from fungi, herbs, residues, and odd materials recovered from Limbo
• +10 with fresh ingredients and containers; −20 if the source is tainted, spoiled, or unstable

• Identify unknown vials, salts, residues, and suspicious bottled solutions

• +10 with smell, color, and reaction tools; −20 if sealed magically or mixed from several schools

• Prepare one-use emergency aids for patrol work, escapes, medical support, or containment
• +10 if the intended use is narrow and specific; −20 if trying to make one mixture do too many jobs

• Prevent accidental ignition, poisoning, or self-humiliation while working with unstable ingredients
• +10 with calm and ventilation; −20 near portals, open flame, or loud companions asking questions

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ANIMAL HANDLING (Presence) — [Wilderness, Social]

Animal Handling covers calming, guiding, feeding, redirecting, training, and understanding beasts that still behave like beasts. In Limbo, that includes ordinary animals, warped strays, dray creatures, and some semi-domesticated oddities that mostly remember how to behave if spoken to with patience and snacks. It is not mind control. It is the practical relationship between one living thing and another that would prefer not to be screamed at. A Creep with Animal Handling knows how to avoid getting bitten by what they're trying to save.

• Calm panicked animals, mounts, hounds, birds, or cargo beasts
• +10 with food, soothing voice, or familiarity; −20 if the creature is injured, cornered, or in magical distress

• Guide, lead, or restrain beasts through danger, noise, crowds, or unstable terrain
+10 with proper tack or harness; −20 if moving through flame, blood, or unnatural fear effects

• Train simple behaviors such as follow, stay, guard, fetch, or carry
+10 with time and repetition; −20 if the creature is stubborn, half-wild, or badly treated

• Interpret behavior, warning posture, scenting, flight signs, or herd stress
+10 with species familiarity; −20 against strange, warped, or dream-touched animals

• Prevent fighting animals from injuring children, civilians, or each other
+10 with barriers and handlers; −20 in chaos, darkness, or if predators are feeding

• Work with dray beasts, patrol hounds, and bonded-but-not-magical companions
+10 if the creature trusts you; −20 if it belongs to someone who does not

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ARCHERY (Grace) — [Combat, Ranged]

Archery covers bows, crossbows, slings, dart-throwers, and thrown weapons in a world of rattling alleys, glowing fog, and targets that sometimes look harmless until they unfold more teeth. It includes breath, aim, judging distance through mushroom haze, and knowing when a shot should be spent on a hand, hinge, lantern, or eye rather than on center mass. In **CREEPS!**, ranged weapons are often used by people who fully intend not to be where the enemy reaches next. A patient shot is frequently better than a heroic one.

• Shoot at distance; target exposed gaps, weak points, or fleeing enemies
−10 / −20 for called shots against armored, tiny, or erratic targets

• Fire from concealment in ruined streets, rafters, fungus groves, or abandoned rooms
+10 if unseen and patient; −20 if firing on the run or after a sudden turn

• Use slings or thrown weapons in alleys, tunnels, and cluttered interiors

+10 at close range with a clear line; −20 through crowds, hanging objects, or panicked motion

• Launch volleys over barricades, canal walls, carts, and packed hostiles
+10 against tightly clustered foes; −20 in wind, steam, or shifting light

• Hunt beasts, drive off scavengers, or drop a thing before it reaches the child
+10 with clear sign and distance; −10 in fog, darkness, or wet conditions

• Shoot from mount, perch, pipe-run, or swaying platform
−20 from unstable footing or full movement; +10 if settled and braced

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ASTRAL LORE (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Arcane, Specialist]

Astral Lore is knowledge of the larger beyond: dream regions, seam behavior, impossible weather, the habits of things that travel without feet, and the old theories about what lies behind Limbo's nearest skin. It covers educated superstition, scholarly record, practical warnings, and the grim fact that some astronomies bite back if studied too directly. In **CREEPS!**, this skill explains what the maps refuse to finish. It is less about certainty than about surviving enough to compare notes later.

• Recall known astral regions, breach types, and broader dimensional classifications
+10 for common or documented phenomena; −20 for rare, sealed, or forbidden subjects

• Identify the likely source-realm or astral influence behind a portal or incursion
+10 with clear signs and residue; −20 if the breach is mixed, corrupted, or deliberately muddied

• Understand the behavior of astral storms, weird tides, dream rain, and seam-weather
+10 with previous observation; −20 if the event is actively unfolding or contradictory

• Recognize symbols, habits, or signs associated with non-Limbo transits and entities
+10 if tied to known enemy groups or schools; −20 if dealing with one-off anomalies

• Compare current conditions to recorded breaches, old incidents, and archived disasters
+10 with access to notes or archives; −20 when forced to rely on memory under stress

• Advise whether the right response is caution, sealing, research, or immediate evacuation
+10 when calm and supported; −20 when under political pressure or personal panic

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ATHLETICS (Endurance) — [Physical]

Athletics covers bursts of exertion, hauling, climbing, scrambling, leaping, and forcing your strange little body through the hard labor of Limbo. Creeps are small, but many are wiry, spring-loaded, or freakishly stubborn, and this skill reflects the ability to keep moving when the tunnel narrows, the bridge breaks, or the chase does not stop when it should. In Limbo, Athletics often means surviving the terrain as much as it means overcoming an enemy. It is used when effort, strain, and body control matter more than refined technique.

• Climb ladders, drain chains, crumbling brick, fungal towers, or collapsed tunnel walls
+10 with rope, handholds, or help; −20 on slick stone, under fire, or while carrying cargo

• Leap gaps, broken walkways, canal breaks, and split floorboards over deep shafts

+10 with a running start; −10 from standing; −20 in panic or on unstable footing

• Force open jammed shutters, swollen doors, hatch-covers, and buckled crawl-panels
+10 with leverage or a second Creep helping; −20 if the mechanism is warped or braced from the far side

• Sprint through danger zones, collapsing rooms, brightfall ledges, and boiling crowd scenes
+10 for a short burst; −20 in armor, with a wounded leg, or during extended pursuit

• Hold your footing while dragging a friend, sack, or unwilling child through rough ground
+10 if the path is known and clear; −20 in slime, rubble, or a crowd

• Wrestle loose debris, push carts, shift furniture, or haul fallen beams off trapped victims
+10 with proper tools; −20 if racing against time or under active portal surge

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BARGAIN (Presence) — [Social, Trade]
Bargain is the skill of haggling, valuation, deal-making, reading a seller's flexibility, pressing for concessions, and knowing when a price is honest, inflated, desperate, ceremonial, or one insult away from becoming a personal feud. In **CREEPS!**, Bargain matters because Limbo is a trade nexus crowded with buyers, sellers, brokers, smugglers, pilgrims, artificers, quartermasters, fence-merchants, and sharp little liars from a hundred cultures, all convinced they deserve the better end of the exchange. This skill is used to negotiate prices, judge the real worth of goods, secure favorable terms, avoid being cheated, and turn uncertain trade into practical advantage. A good Bargain test does not always mean paying less; sometimes it means getting better quality, an added service, useful information, safer contract language, or the good sense to walk away before the smiling merchant sells you three pounds of catastrophe in a velvet bag.

• Negotiate the price of common goods, tools, lodging, routine services, or basic travel arrangements

+10 when dealing in a familiar market with clear prices; **−20** when prices are unstable, emergency-driven, or controlled by hostile monopolies

• Judge whether an item, weapon, relic, or offered service is fairly priced, suspiciously cheap, counterfeit, or inflated for outsiders

+10 when the goods are common and the market is orderly; **−20** when dealing with rare foreign items, artificer work, or goods whose value depends on hidden qualities

• Secure better terms in trade by asking for extras, bundled goods, delivery, repairs, introductions, route advice, or favorable timing instead of raw price cuts

+10 when the seller wants the deal to happen quickly; **−20** when negotiating with proud specialists, officials, or traders who view concessions as weakness

• Avoid being manipulated by fast talk, false urgency, fake scarcity, theatrical offense, or dishonest exchange practices

+10 when given time to inspect, compare, and question; **−20** in chaotic markets, under time pressure, or when multiple parties are pushing the deal at once

• Conduct larger exchanges involving foreign coinage, Pebble conversion, bulk sale, salvage lots, or unusually sensitive goods without losing value to confusion or predation

+10 with written terms, scales, and a recognized broker; **−20** when the exchange is informal, cross-cultural, illicit, or taking place in a district where the law is merely decorative

• Read when walking away is the strongest move—whether because the price is false, the seller is dangerous, the goods are cursed, or the deal is being structured to make later trouble inevitable
+10 when the market allows alternatives and comparison; **−20** when the item is rare, desperately needed, or only available from someone who knows it

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BLACK MARKET ETIQUETTE (Presence) — [Social, Urban, Specialist]

Black Market Etiquette is the etiquette of unofficial exchange: when to speak, when not to, how to ask without naming, how to refuse without insulting, how to display value without looking like prey, and how to survive the kind of transaction where everyone involved would prefer not to exist on paper. In **CREEPS!**, the black market is not a single place but a layer of behavior threaded through many places. This skill is about reading that layer correctly. One bad word can end a sale, start a fight, or identify you as a fool worth robbing.

• Approach fences, illicit traders, smugglers, and quiet brokers in the right manner
+10 with introductions, references, or proper offering; −20 if blunt, desperate, or openly official

• Ask for contraband, restricted services, or dangerous information without naming it stupidly
+10 if you know the current language and code; −20 if using outdated terms or the wrong audience

• Negotiate tone, respect, and expectation before money ever changes hands
+10 when calm and observant; −20 if angry, rushed, or visibly frightened

• Recognize when a seller is trustworthy, insulting you, testing you, or setting up a secondary crime
+10 if you can watch the room and not just the seller; −20 in unfamiliar districts or under pressure

• Decline offers, withdraw from deals, or refuse escalation without losing face
+10 if done early and politely; −20 after greed, threats, or accusations enter the conversation

• Conduct trade in a way that avoids unnecessary enemies, attention, or being remembered too clearly
+10 if dressed and acting for the world you are entering; −20 if carrying obvious Vigil habits like they are contagious

---

BLADES (Grace) — [Combat, Melee]

Blades covers knives, swords, cutters, shears, hooked edges, and all the quick steel used by small dangerous people in close places. In Limbo, blades are practical tools as much as weapons; they cut rope, fungus, pockets, and throats with equal indifference. This skill includes stance, edge alignment, precision, and choosing where to strike when the target is bigger, stranger, or less alive than it ought to be. A good blade-user looks fast even when standing still.

• Fight with knives, short swords, razors, hooks, and fine-edged tools
+10 in tight spaces where long weapons are clumsy; −20 if the blade is poor, chipped, or improvised

• Make quick close-in strikes against exposed joints, wrists, or weak points
−10 / −20 for called shots against armored, twitching, or fast-moving targets

• Use blade work defensively in alleys, tunnels, or narrow stairwells
+10 when controlling a choke point; −20 if surrounded or pressed from multiple sides

• Strike from concealment or after circling into position
+10 if unseen and settled; −20 if attacking while off-balance or mid-run

• Cut free ropes, vines, webbing, seals, or trapped clothing under pressure
+10 with room and line of sight; −20 if the target is thrashing or close to an ally's flesh

• Duel another light-weapon fighter in cramped or treacherous surroundings
+10 on familiar ground; −20 on slick flooring, ladders, or swaying platforms

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BLUNT WEAPONS (Might) — [Combat, Melee]

Blunt Weapons covers clubs, maces, hammers, pipes, weighted sticks, and all the unpleasant instruments used to crush, break, and flatten. In a world full of brittle skeletons, chitinous horrors, and iron-latched things that do not care about elegant swordplay, blunt force has a practical reputation. This skill includes commitment, recovery, target choice, and the discipline not to over-swing in a crowded corridor. It is the language of impact.

• Fight with maces, hammers, clubs, pipes, batons, and weighted improvised tools
+10 against brittle, skeletal, or rigid enemies; −20 if the weapon is too heavy for the user

• Smash locks, frames, wards, brittle support points, or ritual objects in haste
+10 with leverage or a clean angle; −20 if precision matters more than force

• Strike through shields, claws, and grappling attempts with body-stopping force
+10 against charging enemies; −20 while squeezed in very narrow confines

• Knock creatures off ledges, stairs, carts, and walkways with heavy impacts
+10 if braced or higher ground; −20 against rooted or massive opponents

• Use weight and intimidation to hold a doorway or suppress lesser attackers
+10 in a chokepoint; −20 if flanked

• Swing at swarms, clustered pests, or fragile constructs
+10 against packed small targets; −20 against quick, scattered skirmishers

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BRAWLING (Might) — [Combat, Melee]

Brawling is fists, elbows, knees, bites, headbutts, dirty grapples, shoulder-checks, and all the impolite physics of desperate close violence. It covers tavern scraps, tunnel grapples, suppressing a screaming witness before the demon hears, and surviving when your proper weapon has gone skidding into the dark. Creeps are small, but Brawling teaches leverage, angles, and how to make a body regret being near yours. It is ugly, immediate, and often very effective.

• Punch, kick, slam, grapple, trip, or pin an opponent at hand's reach
+10 if stronger or braced; −20 against larger foes with stable footing

• Fight while disarmed, cramped, or in spaces too tight for proper weapons
+10 in truly cramped spaces; −20 if the enemy has reach or backup

• Wrestle for control of an item, hand, lever, or doorway
+10 with help or surprise; −20 if the enemy is anchored or two-handed

• Strike soft targets like nose, throat, fingers, ears, and joints
−10 / −20 for precise dirty shots in fast melee

• Subdue rather than kill, pinning or choking a foe into stillness
+10 if the target is already off-balance; −20 if armored, undead, or pain-blind

• Keep moving in a panic-scrap where everyone is colliding at once
+10 against frightened civilians or lesser nuisances; −20 in full melee crush

Brawling damage is typically 1d3, though a particularly large Creep might inflict 1d3+1 or 1d4.

CONCENTRATION (Endurance) — [Arcane, Mental]

Concentration is the skill of keeping your thoughts in one place when everything else wants them elsewhere. It covers holding spells under pressure, maintaining rituals, staying steady through noise and injury, and forcing your mind to remain useful when fear, exhaustion, or interruption would rather scatter it. In **CREEPS!**, concentration often separates the "competent caster" from "the reason the room is now inside-out." It is not brilliance. It is discipline under strain.

• Maintain a spell, chant, focus, or delicate procedure while threatened or interrupted
+10 in calm protected conditions; −20 while moving, wounded, or shouted at

• Ignore pain, distraction, nausea, fear, or noise long enough to finish something important
+10 for brief effort; −20 over extended duration or repeated interruptions

• Hold a mental image, route, sequence, or phrase while the environment deteriorates
+10 if rehearsed or written down; −20 if the scene is surreal or emotionally invasive

• Resist flinching while touching hot surfaces, unstable glyphs, or dangerous focal objects
+10 with gloves, braces, or support; −20 if the object is alive, pulsing, or screaming

• Keep your spell from collapsing when combat gets too close
+10 if guarded by allies; −20 if directly struck, grappled, or frightened

• Complete a ritual or stabilizing action when failure will obviously make things worse
+10 with a secondary caster assisting; −20 if the portal is actively escalating

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CRAFTING: SIMPLE (Intellect) — [Craft]

Crafting: Simple covers basic making and mending: patching packs, repairing small objects, binding handles, shaping pegs, sewing rough cloth, securing straps, making kits useful again, and turning loose junk into serviceable necessities. It is the field craft of survival and maintenance rather than the prestige of proper workshops. In **CREEPS!**, a great many crises are temporarily held together by string, patience, and the refusal to throw anything away if it might later become a hinge. This skill is humble competence, and humble competence saves lives.

• Repair torn straps, patch cloth, bind grips, mend common gear, and restore simple usefulness
+10 with tools and proper materials; −20 with wet, rotten, or badly damaged items

• Make basic containers, wraps, pegs, braces, markers, and utility pieces in the field
+10 with time and scrap; −20 if rushed or forced to improvise from poor materials

• Convert junk into makeshift solutions such as braces, wedges, lids, splints, or signal devices
+10 with a clear plan; −20 if the object must actually survive hard use

• Keep mission gear functional through long field use and neglect
+10 with downtime; −20 if the gear has already failed once badly

• Patch camp items, lantern rigs, carrying loops, and travel bundles between encounters
+10 in safe work conditions; −20 in rain, dark, or while moving

• Produce something ugly but useful enough to solve the present problem
+10 if "useful" is all that matters; −20 if the thing must also look respectable

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CRAFTING: SMITHING (Intellect) — [Craft]

Crafting: Smithing covers metal shaping, repair, and practical forge-work: blades, hooks, rivets, hinges, brackets, clamps, spikes, nails, plates, reinforcement bands, frame fittings, and all the hard pieces that keep the softer world from coming apart too quickly. In **CREEPS!**, smithing is not merely industry—it is defensive infrastructure. Portal frames, district gates, shield bosses, lampwork, lock fittings, and emergency braces all depend on somebody knowing how metal behaves when struck correctly. It is exacting, hot, loud, and deeply respected by those who prefer not to be eaten through a failed hinge.

• Forge or repair simple weapons, tools, fasteners, and reinforcement pieces
+10 with a proper forge and stock; −20 in makeshift fire, with bad metal, or under time pressure

• Sharpen, straighten, rivet, reset, or harden damaged metal gear
+10 for minor wear and clean bends; −20 for cracks, magical damage, or structural fatigue

• Build brackets, lock parts, frame pieces, and support fittings for practical use
+10 with patterns and measurements; −20 if improvising around nonstandard dimensions

• Reinforce doors, hatches, shutters, and vulnerable district infrastructure
+10 if materials are ready and access is clear; −20 if the structure is already failing

• Assess whether metal damage came from force, age, corrosion, magic, or bad design
+10 with close inspection; −20 when the object is still hot, active, or dangerous to touch

• Produce durable goods meant to survive field strain and recurring use
+10 with workshop support; −20 when expected to do all the work quietly

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CRAFTING: WOOD/LEATHER (Intellect) — [Craft]

Crafting: Wood/Leather covers shaped organic materials: handles, sheaths, cases, simple armor parts, masks, harness, scabbards, grips, shields, tool-backs, hinges, lashings, and all the sturdy practical things made from once-living matter. In Limbo, this skill is highly valued because imported goods are expensive, old things need replacement, and much of life still depends on well-made simple objects. It includes repair as much as construction. A craftsperson in this field rarely receives the glory and frequently receives the work.

• Make or repair belts, straps, sheaths, pouches, harness, bindings, and leather field gear
+10 with cured material and proper tools; −20 with warped, wet, or scavenged scraps

• Shape handles, hafts, pegs, braces, shield boards, crates, and rigid utility forms
+10 with measured cuts and workshop support; −20 if the wood is rotten, twisted, or half-charred

• Fit or reinforce light armor, travel gear, and mount tackle
+10 if matching existing pieces; −20 if building to strange anatomy or bad measurements

• Patch cracked shields, broken bow-grips, or warped equipment after field damage
+10 when the damage is clean; −20 if splintered, burnt, or ritual-marked

• Produce practical gear meant for repeated use in patrol, travel, or district life
+10 with time and patterns; −20 under emergency conditions

• Judge whether a damaged object is salvageable or should be abandoned before it kills someone
+10 with hands-on inspection; −20 if forced to guess from a glance

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DANGER SENSE (Awareness) — [Perception]

Danger Sense is the prickling, reactive awareness that something is wrong before it fully becomes visible. It is the skill of noticing the silent crowd, the wrong stillness, the pause in a canal's lap, the too-clean alley, the unblinking lantern, the smell that should not be there. In **CREEPS!**, many things kill by surprise, and this skill reflects the reflexive side of Awareness: not deep analysis, but immediate survival intuition. It is often the difference between "walked into" and "saw coming just soon enough."

• Sense an ambush, hidden predator, or waiting enemy before it strikes
+10 when moving cautiously or already suspicious; −20 while distracted, chatting, or carrying too much

• Notice trap signs, pressure points, trip-lines, disturbed dust, or wrong-set objects
+10 when specifically searching; −20 against expertly hidden devices or magical concealment

• Feel the first signs of portal agitation, mood shift, or instability in a room
+10 in familiar portals or districts; −20 during loud combat, panic, or multiple overlapping anomalies

• React to incoming collapse, burst, leap, or sudden environmental threat
+10 with clear line of sight and footing; −20 when fatigued, dazzled, or already engaged

• Recognize that an NPC, child, or companion is reacting to a danger before you see it yourself
+10 if you know them well; −20 if the warning signs are subtle or social rather than physical

• Get that useful, nasty feeling that the room is wrong even if you cannot yet explain why
+10 in quiet scenes; −20 in crowded or overstimulating environments

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DECEPTION (Presence) — [Social, Subterfuge]

Deception is lying, misleading, misdirecting, bluffing, disguising motive, and making falsehood feel like the simplest shape of truth in the room. In **CREEPS!**, deception is as much about omission and selective panic as it is about polished lies. A good liar knows what not to say, when to look embarrassed, when to look offended, and how to make the other person tell themselves the rest. The danger is that Limbo notices some lies more than people do.

• Tell a convincing lie, half-truth, or excuse under ordinary questioning
+10 if the lie is simple and close to truth; −20 if elaborate, improvised, or opposed by evidence

• Conceal fear, guilt, hidden intent, or prior knowledge in conversation
+10 if emotionally composed; −20 if the subject matters to you too much

• Bluff authority, confidence, familiarity, or permission to be somewhere you should not
+10 with costume, badge, or paperwork; −20 if challenged by an insider

• Create a false impression of weakness, ignorance, or harmlessness
+10 if your appearance supports it; −20 if your sword is still wet

• Distract attention from a friend's actions, hidden object, or ongoing crime
+10 with supporting noise or confusion; −20 when everyone is already looking at you

• Sell a lie to strangers, suspicious patrols, criminals, or frightened children
+10 if they want to believe it; −20 if believing you would put them in danger

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DREAM ECHO (Presence) — [Arcane, Specialist]

Dream Echo is the skill of reproducing, catching, and shaping the residue of dream-sound and remembered feeling that clings to places touched by sleep, fear, yearning, or portal pressure. It is not identical to Dreamcraft; where Dreamcraft works with dream logic broadly, Dream Echo deals with the impressions left behind—voices in walls, repeated phrases, emotional loops, sonic afterimages, and those almost-heard fragments that can either reveal the truth or make everyone deeply regret listening longer. In **CREEPS!**, this skill is intimate and eerie. It is how one asks a room what it remembers.

• Hear, isolate, or interpret dream residues left in a place, object, or threshold
+10 in recently active or emotionally charged sites; −20 where many overlapping impressions muddy the echo

• Reproduce a dream impression clearly enough to examine, compare, or share it
+10 with quiet and focus; −20 in noise, panic, or active instability

• Strengthen or dampen emotional resonance in a small area for brief effect
+10 if the room already leans the way you want; −20 if trying to reverse a strong prevailing mood

• Use dream echoes to trace a child's fear, a sleeper's influence, or a recurring nightmare route
+10 with a known subject; −20 if the source has changed, hidden, or fragmented

• Distinguish true memory-residue from planted glamour, mimicry, or self-deception
+10 with corroborating clues; −20 if the echo is old, manipulated, or too personal to the listener

• Work at the edge of haunting without being swallowed by sentiment, nostalgia, or terror

+10 if grounded by an ally or ritual object; −20 when exhausted, grieving, or alone

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DREAMCRAFT (Presence) — [Arcane, Specialist]

Dreamcraft is the intuitive, emotional, and symbolic side of Limbo's weirdness: shaping dream residue, reading dream logic, influencing sleep-bled spaces, and dealing with things that respond more to meaning than to mechanics. It differs from Sorcery by being softer, stranger, and often more dangerous to the user's sense of self. In **CREEPS!**, Dreamcraft is what lets a guardian comfort a nightmare, lure a dream-form into a safer shape, or understand why a child's fear has turned the hallway into a teeth-filled corridor. It is less "casting" than "negotiating with imagination under bad conditions."

• Influence dream-heavy environments, sleeping thresholds, and emotion-shaped spaces
+10 in active dream sites with a clear emotional anchor; −20 in sterile, dead, or heavily warded spaces

• Read symbolic meaning from dream objects, repeated images, and warped room logic
+10 with context from the dreamer or site; −20 when symbols conflict or shift too quickly

• Calm, redirect, or soften a nightmare presence without destroying it outright
+10 with empathy and quiet; −20 if the dream-form is already feeding or cornered

• Shape or encourage harmless dream manifestations such as lights, signs, echoes, or paths
+10 for minor effects aligned to the dream mood; −20 for forceful or contradictory shaping

• Recognize when a child, witness, or wounded Creep is unintentionally altering local reality
+10 if the emotional cause is obvious; −20 if multiple minds are affecting the same area

• Resist becoming too entangled in dream-logic yourself while using the skill
+10 if anchored by an ally, object, or rite; −20 if exhausted, lonely, or emotionally exposed

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ENGINEERING (Intellect) — [Technical]

Engineering is the broader practical understanding of mechanisms, structures, pressure, support, movement, load, utility systems, and why things built by optimistic people eventually fail in the rain. It differs from Portal Engineering by applying to the ordinary but no less important machinery of Limbo: pumps, lifts, shutters, lockworks, drains, wheels, pulleys, gates, braces, lantern systems, carts, and civic contraptions. In **CREEPS!**, engineering often means preserving a district from collapse with three bolts, one swear, and a suspicious amount of confidence. It is the skill of making the useful world continue.

• Repair, jury-rig, or understand mechanisms such as lifts, pumps, winches, shutters, and lockworks
+10 with diagrams, tools, or prior familiarity; −20 if the machine is damaged, improvised, or active under strain

• Assess structural supports, braces, load paths, and likely failure points in built spaces
+10 with time and access; −20 during collapse, crowd pressure, or bad visibility

• Build practical solutions using gears, hinges, pulleys, counterweights, and moving parts
+10 in workshop conditions; −20 in field improvisation with salvage only

• Disable, bypass, or stabilize non-arcane hazards and mechanisms safely
+10 if the system is visible and understandable; −20 if concealed, trapped, or previously tampered with

• Keep district infrastructure functioning during crisis: water flow, lamp rigging, gates, or lifts
+10 with a trained crew; −20 when every part of the problem is also someone else's emergency

• Tell the difference between failure by age, sabotage, overload, and incompetence
+10 with evidence and inspection; −20 when asked to conclude before the dust settles

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ESCAPE (Grace) — [Physical, Utility]

Escape is the art of slipping bonds, wriggling through spaces that seem too small, twisting free from grabs, and keeping your body your own. In **CREEPS!**, this includes both deliberate contortion and the grim practical knowledge of how ropes, cages, webbing, shackles, and little too-tight places fail under stress. Many creatures of Limbo catch before they kill. A Creep who knows Escape tends to remain alive, annoyed, and difficult to inventory.

• Slip ropes, cuffs, netting, thorn-vines, fungal cords, or cheap restraints
+10 if the bindings are rushed or poorly tied; −20 if iron-fastened, locked, or magical

• Twist free of grabs, holds, and pinning limbs in close quarters
+10 if the captor is distracted; −20 if multiple attackers are involved

• Crawl through vents, drain-slots, wall gaps, and half-collapsed flues
+10 for a body built small and light; −20 if burdened, armored, or panicking

• Work one hand loose to reach a hidden pick, knife, or lock tool
+10 if hands are in front; −20 if wrists are behind the back or hanging

• Break line of control during transport, interrogation, or ritual preparation
+10 if a companion helps create confusion; −20 under close watch

• Avoid being fully trapped by webs, slime, adhesive, or swallowing flesh
+10 if acting immediately; −20 if left to settle or harden

FORAGE (Awareness) — [Wilderness, Utility]

Forage is the patient art of finding what can be used: edible fungi, medicinal growths, dry tinder, passable water, useful scrap, fungus-thread, insect protein, and all the miscellaneous ingredients that make the difference between "supplied" and "desperate." In Limbo, forage is never only about food. It is about reading the local ecology and knowing which odd little resources matter today. A Creep with Forage has a habit of coming back with things everyone else somehow walked past.

• Find edible mushrooms, safe roots, insect-nests, fishable spots, or salvageable organics
+10 in rich fungal districts or along waterways; −20 in barren, tainted, or heavily scavenged areas

• Gather herbs, mosses, spores, and raw ingredients for medicine or alchemy
+10 with a basket, knife, or prior knowledge; −20 when rushed or harvesting at night under threat

• Find dry fuel, lamp-oil substitutes, patching cloth, cordage, or simple camp materials
+10 in abandoned districts or wreck-sites; −20 after rain, flood, or repeated looting

• Recognize whether local food and water are safe enough to use
+10 in known regions; −20 in recently unstable, cursed, or demon-touched zones

• Pick through ruins for useful odds and ends without wasting time
+10 with experience in the type of ruin; −20 if the place is trapped, guarded, or collapsing

• Make a bad day slightly less bad by producing one weirdly necessary item from the environment
+10 with time to search properly; −20 when everyone is watching you and asking if you're done yet

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HERBALISM (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Utility]

Herbalism is the identification, preparation, and practical use of plants, fungi, mosses, roots, spores, sap, and growth-derived materials for healing, calming, poisoning, flavoring, preserving, and occasionally embarrassing someone in ways not easily explained to authorities. In **CREEPS!**, this skill often overlaps with Forage and Medicine, but it is distinct: it is the knowledge of what a growth is, what it does, how to prepare it, and when not to combine it with something glowing. Herbalism is where domestic tradition, hedge craft, and field necessity meet. It smells earthy until it doesn't.

• Identify medicinal, toxic, soporific, or reactive growths in the field
+10 with fresh samples and clear features; −20 if dried, mixed, or partially consumed

• Prepare salves, poultices, calming teas, smoke bundles, or simple curatives
+10 with tools and known recipe; −20 if rushed or using poor substitutes

• Recognize harmful spores, contamination, and bad combinations before they are used
+10 with time to inspect; −20 in dark, stress, or under pressure from impatient patients

• Support healing, poison treatment, and restorative care with correct plant or fungal use
+10 with clean water and rest; −20 if the injury is magical, infernal, or rapidly worsening

• Produce mild field toxins, repellents, or soporifics where appropriate and legal enough
+10 when ingredients are fresh; −20 when trying to mimic something rare from memory

• Judge whether local growth is naturally occurring, cultivated, warped, or dream-affected
+10 in known regions; −20 near unstable portals, curse-sites, or astral runoff

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INSIGHT (Awareness) — [Social, Perception]

Insight is reading people and person-adjacent things: tone, silence, posture, hesitation, false certainty, suppressed panic, hunger, bad faith, and all the tiny emotional leaks that betray a mind trying not to be known. In **CREEPS!**, this skill is invaluable because many threats wear polite faces before they show claws. Insight does not guarantee truth, but it often reveals where the truth is not. It is the slow tightening in your chest when someone smiles half a second too late.

• Sense when someone is lying, omitting, performing, or concealing intention
+10 if you can watch them closely in a calm setting; −20 if distracted, rushed, or dealing with trained deceivers

• Read fear, guilt, grief, stubbornness, or hidden motive in conversation
+10 when the emotion is strong; −20 if the target is controlled, numb, or nonhuman in ways you do not understand

• Tell whether a witness knows more than they are saying
+10 if they are personally involved; −20 if they are confused, traumatized, or dream-touched

• Recognize when an NPC is about to bolt, attack, shut down, or bargain
+10 if their body language is visible; −20 through masks, veils, darkness, or magical calm

• Detect bad-faith offers, dangerous contracts, and too-easy promises
+10 when allowed time to think; −20 if the deal is urgent or personally tempting

• Notice when a child, companion, or ally is reacting to something unseen
+10 if you know them well; −20 if many emotional signals are crossing the room at once

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INTIMIDATION (Presence or Might) — [Social]

Intimidation is the use of fear, force, certainty, posture, or menace to break resistance without necessarily breaking the body first. Some Creeps do this with looming presence and hard eyes; others do it by planting a mace in a doorframe or speaking with the deadened confidence of someone who will absolutely make the problem worse if refused. In Limbo, intimidation works best when it sounds like consequence rather than tantrum. It is useful, but it leaves marks that do not always show immediately.

• Threaten, cow, or shut down a weaker-willed target before violence begins
+10 with leverage, visible strength, or advantage of position; −20 against fanatics, undead, or those cornered beyond reason

• Force quick compliance at a checkpoint, in a black-market exchange, or during arrest
+10 if backed by rank or numbers; −20 if bluffing without support

• Break the nerve of skittish beasts, lesser nuisances, petty criminals, or bully-types
+10 against already uncertain targets; −20 if they think you cannot follow through

• Dominate a conversation by making refusal feel dangerous or expensive
+10 if your threat is credible and immediate; −20 if the target has social protection or witnesses

• Use physical displays—weapon strikes, slammed doors, crushing strength—to reinforce your point
+10 when the display fits the warning; −20 if it feels theatrical or uncontrolled

• Hold ground against pressure by seeming more dangerous than retreat
+10 in close quarters and dark spaces; −20 if obviously wounded, outnumbered, or shaking

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INVESTIGATION (Awareness) — [Investigation]

Investigation is active clue-work: searching rooms, tracing contradictions, examining damage, noticing what is present and what is suspiciously absent, and building a practical picture of what happened in a scene. It differs from Scholar by being immediate, physical, and scene-based. In **CREEPS!**, investigators pull at loose thread, ask the bad question, check behind the wardrobe, and notice that the blood trail ends three feet too early. This skill rewards attention, skepticism, and a refusal to accept the first explanation when the second one smells worse.

• Search rooms, alleys, tunnels, workshops, and breach sites for clues
+10 with time and controlled access; −20 if the scene is crowded, trampled, or still dangerous

• Notice signs of struggle, forced entry, tampering, hidden movement, or missing objects
+10 when the scene is fresh; −20 after weather, flood, fire, or clean-up efforts

• Examine a clue and infer likely use, sequence, or significance in the local context
+10 with supporting evidence; −20 when several explanations remain equally ugly

• Question a scene rather than a person: what happened first, where someone stood, how something left
+10 with stable light and careful thought; −20 when rushed to act before the room is understood

• Link one clue to another and build a probable chain of events
+10 when evidence clearly overlaps; −20 if the culprit planted false leads or dream-residue

• Find hidden compartments, messages, caches, or signs of deliberate concealment
+10 if you know the type of building or owner; −20 against skilled smugglers, spies, or paranoids

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LOCKPICKING (Grace) — [Utility, Subterfuge]

Lockpicking is the practical and delicate art of opening things that were politely asking not to be opened. It covers latches, warded clasps, keyholes, pressure locks, tumblers, hidden catches, simple safes, service hatches, and the thousand petty barriers put between a Creep and whatever they urgently need or should definitely leave alone. In **CREEPS!**, lockpicking is useful for rescue, theft, investigation, escape, and professional embarrassment avoidance. It is patience in metal form.

• Open ordinary locks, latches, shutters, hatches, and service mechanisms without the key
+10 with proper tools and calm; −20 with improvised tools, bad light, or shaking hands

• Work quickly enough to matter during pursuit, stealth, or rising danger
+10 on familiar lock styles; −20 when rushed or interrupted

• Bypass concealed catches, layered fastenings, or mechanisms disguised as something else
+10 if the housing is visible and accessible; −20 if trapped, rusted, or half-broken already

• Open difficult locks cleanly enough to leave little evidence of entry
+10 with time and care; −20 if the lock must be forced subtly under pressure

• Recognize when a lock is beyond your means, trapped, or better handled another way
+10 with prior inspection; −20 when pride and urgency start dating

• Use lock knowledge to secure or re-secure something after entry
+10 if you understand the mechanism; −20 if parts were bent, damaged, or improvised

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LORE: ANCIENT TEXTS (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Specialist]

Lore: Ancient Texts covers dead languages, old archives, forgotten scripts, fragile records, religious books, sealed manuals, ruined ledgers, and all the scribbled remains of people who assumed someone later would be better at context. In **CREEPS!**, the past leaves paper, tablet, etching, vellum, fungus-ink, coded brass strips, and other inconvenient things behind. This skill is less about speed than patience and respect. Old texts rarely answer the question you asked; they answer the question you should have been afraid to ask instead.

• Read, translate, or partially reconstruct archaic or obsolete written material
+10 with reference material or repeated symbols; −20 if fragmentary, damaged, or encoded

• Identify the age, origin, or likely authorial tradition of a text or inscription
+10 for well-preserved and familiar material; −20 for mixed-copy texts or deliberate falsifications

• Extract practical information from a record not written for practical use
+10 with time and quiet; −20 when rushed, interrupted, or handling ceremonial language

• Recognize when a text is incomplete, dangerous, censored, or falsely attributed
+10 if comparing versions; −20 if reading from a single damaged source

• Understand old rituals, legal terms, place names, and archival references tied to current events
+10 with corroborating records; −20 if local meanings shifted over generations

• Handle fragile or cursed texts without destroying them or yourself
+10 with tools and proper support; −20 when forced to read in the field

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LORE: ARCANE (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Arcane]

Lore: Arcane is the academic and practical understanding of magic as a body of knowledge: schools, signatures, spell histories, known effects, famous disasters, common ward-types, and the countless bad ideas that become much more dangerous when properly named. It overlaps with Sorcery and Runes & Glyphs, but differs by being primarily interpretive rather than active. In **CREEPS!**, a Creep with Arcane Lore is the one who says, "No, don't touch that," just before someone else touches it anyway. It is a scholar's map of a territory that still bites.

• Identify a spell effect, magical residue, aura, charm, or hostile working
+10 for common, recent, or well-documented magic; −20 for ancient, alien, or heavily corrupted workings

• Recall known traditions, schools, taboos, and magical practices associated with a place or object
+10 with access to notes, archives, or prior study; −20 if relying on memory under pressure

• Infer the likely purpose of a ritual space, enchanted device, or sealed chamber
+10 when the site is intact and readable; −20 if damaged, layered, or mixed with dream effects

• Compare an active magical event to historical precedents or formal doctrine
+10 if the event fits known patterns; −20 if it breaks them in several directions at once

• Warn others about likely magical consequences before they trigger them
+10 if there is time to explain; −20 if the room is already erupting

• Distinguish "bad but normal" magic from "we should run immediately" magic
+10 with clear evidence; −20 when panic, rumor, or hostile glamour muddies judgment

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LORE: CREATURES & BEASTS (Intellect) — [Knowledge]

Lore: Creatures & Beasts is practical bestiary knowledge: what a thing eats, where it nests, how it signals, what scares it, whether it is territorial, how it kills, and which parts of the body matter if one intends to survive the encounter. It differs from Tracking by focusing on known patterns rather than immediate sign. In **CREEPS!**, this skill is beloved by cautious patrols, hunters, medics, and anyone who is tired of learning monster behavior by being bitten. It is the difference between "a creature" and "that creature."

• Identify common and uncommon beasts, horrors, pests, and local fauna by sign or sight
+10 for familiar district species; −20 for altered, starved, or magically warped specimens

• Recall likely habits, senses, nesting behavior, prey choices, or movement patterns
+10 if the species is well documented; −20 for unique, rare, or cross-planar creatures

• Know practical weaknesses, avoidances, and safest engagement methods
+10 with field notes or previous encounters; −20 if the creature breaks its usual type

• Determine whether a creature is hunting, nesting, wounded, frightened, or feeding
+10 with time to observe; −20 if glimpsed in chaos or poor visibility

• Advise the group whether to fight, flee, distract, feed, trap, or leave it entirely alone
+10 if signs are clear and the situation is stable; −20 if multiple creature types overlap

• Recognize when a "beast encounter" is actually a dream anomaly, summoned construct, or disguise
+10 if supported by Arcane or Dreamcraft insight; −20 if the creature is intentionally mimicking the natural

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LORE: DIMENSIONS (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Arcane, Specialist]

Lore: Dimensions is the study of other realms as places rather than as active magical conditions. It covers mapped and rumored worlds, cosmological theory, cross-planar habits, environmental expectations, known transit laws, and the cultural or biological oddities of elsewhere. In **CREEPS!**, this skill matters whenever a breach is not merely from the Human World or a local dream pocket. It is the scholar's warning that "outside" is not a single place. Some dimensions are neighbors; some are diseases with architecture.

• Recall known dimensions, border realms, and categories of outside environments
+10 for documented and frequently breached realms; −20 for sealed, mythic, or theoretical ones

• Identify likely environmental dangers or cultural assumptions of a source-realm
+10 with clear residue or witness account; −20 if the breach is contaminated or mixed

• Predict what kinds of beings, materials, weather, or laws might accompany a crossing
+10 if the breach is stable and readable; −20 if it is ragged, unstable, or newly formed

• Compare one dimensional event to another and tell whether they are related
+10 with archives and samples; −20 if relying on rumor or panic-driven reports

• Advise on equipment, diplomacy, containment, or quarantine for extradimensional contact
+10 if time exists to plan; −20 if making decisions mid-incident

• Recognize when a supposed "new dimension" is actually dream bleed, astral spill, or local myth reified
+10 with support from Arcane and Dreamcraft; −20 when the event wants to be misunderstood

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LORE: HUMAN (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Worldly]
Lore: Human is the practical and studied understanding of the Human World: its habits, customs, buildings, family structures, professions, routines, objects, technologies, superstitions, institutions, and the many quiet systems by which humans organize their lives while missing what lives in the walls. In **CREEPS!**, this skill is not just "knowing

humans exist." It is knowing the difference between a school and a hospital at a glance, recognizing what a night-light means in a child's room, understanding why a locked office matters differently than a locked pantry, and having enough sense to realize when a perfectly ordinary human object is about to become a supernatural problem. A Creep with Human Lore knows that the Human World runs on patterns, and that those patterns are often more dangerous than the humans themselves.

• Identify the likely purpose of a human room, building, object, or piece of domestic clutter
+10 for common homes, schools, stores, or familiar household spaces; −20 for specialized facilities, obscure technology, or unusual human subcultures

• Recall common human customs, routines, holidays, family habits, and social expectations
+10 for ordinary daily behavior or widely known traditions; −20 for highly local customs, niche communities, or modern trends the Creep has had little reason to study

• Recognize the significance of a human institution, profession, uniform, or role
+10 when the clues are obvious and contemporary; −20 if the signs are outdated, partial, foreign, or easy to misread from a Limbo perspective

• Infer what human emotional pressures may be shaping a house, family, child, or neighborhood
+10 with time to observe behavior, décor, and routine; −20 if working from fragments, panic, or one very bad overheard argument

• Navigate human domestic logic, including privacy, ownership, schedules, and the difference between suspicious and ordinary behavior
+10 in homes, apartments, and family spaces; −20 in offices, industrial spaces, institutions, or environments built for rules rather than comfort

• Distinguish harmless human weirdness from the kind that suggests portal strain, dream pressure, Trespasser influence, or supernatural contamination
+10 with repeated exposure to the same people or place; −20 when fear, rumor, modern technology, or exhaustion blur the line

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LORE: LIMBO HISTORY (Intellect) — [Knowledge]

Lore: Limbo History is the memory of districts, disasters, treaties, collapses, schisms, old patrol routes, vanished families, founding myths, and the slow administrative tragedies that turned some neighborhoods into cautionary songs. In a setting like **CREEPS!**, history matters because old mistakes still have doors attached to them. This skill tells you what stood here before the seam opened, who built the canal wall that keeps singing at midnight, and why no one jokes about Brightfall after the third watch-bell. The past in Limbo is rarely dead; it is merely waiting to be filed badly.

• Recall historical events, old catastrophes, district changes, and political disputes
+10 for major public events; −20 for buried scandal, erased records, or local taboo

• Identify old landmarks, former names, or prior uses of a place now ruined or repurposed
+10 if there are still visible clues; −20 if the site has been rebuilt several times

• Understand the historical cause of a present fear, feud, warning, or superstition
+10 when the superstition is common; −20 if the truth was deliberately hidden

• Recognize old Vigil practices, retired protocols, and legacy portal installations

+10 with supporting records; −20 if working from anecdote or partial archive

• Connect present anomalies to earlier incidents, breaches, or recurring patterns
+10 if the current event closely resembles a known case; −20 if it resembles several at once

• Impress historians, archivists, elders, or district loyalists by knowing what should be remembered
+10 when respectful and specific; −20 if speaking carelessly about the dead

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MEDICINE (Intellect) — [Healing, Utility]

Medicine is practiced care of bodies: wounds, shock, breaks, infection, poison, bad air, panic collapse, fever, frost, burns, exhaustion, and the less dignified ways a patrol can fall apart after something with too many elbows gets involved. In **CREEPS!**, medicine is practical, improvised, and rarely performed under ideal conditions. It includes triage in alleys, treatment in safehouses, and knowing when someone needs rest more than heroics. A medic in Limbo is often the person most irritated that the patient is still attempting to stand.

• Stabilize bleeding, shock, collapse, and urgent trauma in the field
+10 with supplies, help, and time; −20 under fire, in filth, or during active portal events

• Treat cuts, breaks, poison, fever, bites, spore exposure, and environmental damage
+10 with proper diagnosis and ingredients; −20 if symptoms overlap or the cause is magical

• Judge whether a patient can travel, fight, cast, rest, or should absolutely do none of those
+10 with full examination; −20 if forced to decide at a glance mid-crisis

• Support recovery with correct dressing, splinting, cleaning, and follow-up care
+10 in shelter and quiet; −20 if the patient keeps moving, arguing, or bleeding on everything

• Distinguish ordinary injury from curse, dream infection, possession, or dimensional contamination
+10 with support from Arcane or Dreamcraft; −20 when the condition is rare or actively evolving

• Keep frightened civilians, children, and wounded patrols functional during extended incidents
+10 with reassurance and order; −20 if resources are short or the scene remains unstable

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MIMICRY (Presence) — [Social, Specialist]

Mimicry is the imitation of voices, sounds, accents, calls, habits of speech, and recognizable audible behaviors. It covers practical deception, performance tricks, field signaling, and the eerie art of sounding like something you are not long enough to matter. In **CREEPS!**, mimicry is useful for luring creatures,

fooling guards, comforting children, or creating the impression that someone else is already in the next room. It is also the sort of skill that tends to become unsettling if practiced too enthusiastically. Some voices should not fit in your throat that well.

• Imitate a person's voice, accent, phrasing, or emotional tone well enough to pass briefly
+10 if you have heard them recently and clearly; −20 for long conversations or close familiarity

• Copy calls, cries, alarms, whistles, and common district sounds
+10 for simple or repeated sounds; −20 for layered, musical, or magical ones

• Mislead listeners about distance, number, or identity of speakers nearby
+10 with echoing or obstructed terrain; −20 in bright open space with clear sightlines

• Use mimicry to lure beasts, scouts, or fools into an ambush or safer route
+10 against curious or trained-to-respond targets; −20 against highly suspicious, intelligent, or previously fooled ones

• Support performance, scams, and dream-work with uncanny but controlled imitation
+10 when used sparingly; −20 when trying to maintain several false signals at once

• Create harmless comfort by reproducing familiar voices for frightened noncombatants
+10 if the relationship is warm and obvious; −20 if the listener is already emotionally unstable

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NATURAL ATTACK (Might) — [Combat, Melee]

Natural Attack covers teeth, claws, horns, tails, kicks, spurs, mandibles, and whatever else a given Creep, beast, or nightmare brought into the world on purpose or by accident. It is not merely savagery; it includes how to use your own body's strange weapons without overcommitting, tangling, or breaking them against something harder than expected. In Limbo, plenty of things are armed before they ever pick up steel. This skill favors immediacy, instinct, and very personal violence.

• Strike with claws, bites, horns, tail-whips, spines, or body-built weapons
+10 if the attack follows movement, pounce, or grapple; −20 against rigid armor or hard shell

• Use natural weapons in darkness, panic, or too-tight spaces for carried gear
+10 when already in contact; −20 if an enemy controls reach

• Worry at exposed limbs, straps, throats, or weak tissue
−10 / −20 for precise called shots against elusive targets

• Combine body-weapon use with grappling, climbing, or sudden lunging
+10 if attacking from above, below, or surprise; −20 while restrained

• Fight after disarmament, capture break, or transformation
+10 when instinctive and immediate; −20 if the anatomy is unfamiliar, altered, or injured

• Threaten without committing, using posture, growl, or display
+10 against skittish creatures; −20 against fearless undead or machines

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NAVIGATION (Awareness) — [Wilderness, Travel]

Navigation is the skill of not getting lost, even when the world would prefer you to. In Limbo, that is not

trivial. Streets bend wrong, tunnels repeat, districts swallow landmarks, and portal-rich regions may subtly re-arrange themselves around attention and fear. Navigation covers routes, landmarks, orientation, and the practical memory of how one gets from the Lantern Streets to the still-black canals without walking into three entirely unrelated disasters first. A navigator knows both where they are and where trouble would expect them to go.

• Find routes through districts, alleys, tunnels, terraces, shafts, and sewer cuts
+10 with maps, markers, or prior travel; −20 in fog, blackouts, or instability-active zones

• Keep bearings underground or in districts where landmarks repeat deceptively
+10 with visible guides, starshafts, or canal lines; −20 in mirrored corridors or dream-shifted layouts

• Plot a safe or discreet route for escort, pursuit, or smuggling
+10 if time allows planning; −20 if chased, rushed, or carrying a frightened child

• Avoid bad districts, blocked choke points, patrol routes, or predator territory
+10 with local gossip or fresh reports; −20 if the situation changed after the last watch-cycle

• Lead others without hesitation through complex terrain where indecision is dangerous
+10 if the group trusts you; −20 if they are noisy, scared, or arguing

• Return to a known portal, safehouse, shrine, or checkpoint under pressure
+10 with familiar anchors; −20 after a collapse, flood, or portal pulse

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ORATORY (Presence) — [Social]

Oratory is formal speaking, command voice, public persuasion, ceremonial address, and the useful skill of sounding like you know what the room ought to do next. In Limbo, that may mean calming a district after an Alert, persuading angry shopkeepers not to riot over missing lantern oil, or making a terrified child trust the shape in the doorway. It covers performance of authority as much as truth. A strong speech in **CREEPS!** may save more lives than a sharp blade.

• Address crowds, assemblies, patrol groups, or tense public scenes
+10 with a platform, symbol of authority, or prepared words; −20 if shouted over panic or noise

• Rally frightened bystanders, recruits, or exhausted allies after a bad breach
+10 if visibly brave or bloodied from service; −20 if already distrusted

• Deliver a formal warning, accusation, report, or public condemnation
+10 with evidence or official backing; −20 if speaking against local custom or rank

• De-escalate a mob, neighborhood clash, or anti-Vigil outburst
+10 if speaking their language and concerns; −20 if armed forces are already visible

• Impress officials, scholars, guilds, or elder Kith at structured gatherings
+10 if respectful and informed; −20 if improvised, flippant, or visibly compromised

• Guide a child, civilian, or witness through fear using calm, memorable words
+10 with warmth and clarity; −20 if the scene is actively unstable or surreal

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PERFORMANCE (Presence) — [Social]

Performance is deliberate public expression: music, dance, recitation, drama, comic timing, spectacle, storytelling, and the management of attention through art rather than argument. In **CREEPS!**, performance is not merely entertainment. It can calm a district, distract a crowd, earn trust, cover a theft, soothe a child, or lure something listening in the dark closer than it ought to come. A good performer understands rhythm, audience, and when silence is the strongest note in the room. Limbo remembers songs longer than laws.

• Entertain, distract, or emotionally guide an audience in public or private
+10 with a receptive crowd and proper space; −20 if the audience is hostile, terrified, or half-running

• Hold attention long enough for an ally to work unnoticed or reposition
+10 if the act suits the audience; −20 if the distraction is obvious or badly timed

• Use story, humor, or song to calm frightened children, witnesses, or civilians
+10 with warmth and familiarity; −20 if the fear is immediate and physical

• Impress patrons, officials, guilds, or strangers and gain goodwill from talent
+10 when practiced and prepared; −20 if exhausted, wounded, or performing with bad tools

• Read a room well enough to shift from levity to solemnity before losing them
+10 with local cultural knowledge; −20 if the crowd expects something you do not know

• Participate in ritual or ceremonial expression where form matters as much as content
+10 with rehearsal and tradition; −20 if improvising under scrutiny

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PERSUASION (Presence) — [Social]

Persuasion is the practical ability to get someone to agree, cooperate, calm down, listen longer, or at least stop doing the worst possible thing for the next few moments. It is not command voice—that belongs to Oratory—nor deceit, nor terror. It is conversation, leverage, timing, tone, and the insight to offer what the other person can accept without feeling stupid for accepting it. In **CREEPS!**, this often matters more than combat, because half of Limbo's crises begin with somebody refusing to tell the truth or take the obvious exit.

• Convince civilians, children, officials, merchants, or low-level enemies to cooperate
+10 if your request is reasonable and timely; −20 if it costs them pride, money, or safety

• Calm frightened witnesses, panicked patrols, or grieving families during an Alert
+10 with empathy and patience; −20 if they already blame the Vigil or the speaker personally

• Negotiate for access, information, a favor, or a brief suspension of hostility
+10 with a useful offer or evidence; −20 if empty-handed, compromised, or obviously desperate

• Get an NPC to keep still, stay hidden, or follow instructions during danger
+10 if the speaker appears competent and calm; −20 if the environment is collapsing around them

• Redirect a conversation away from suspicion, blame, or escalation
+10 if done early; −20 after accusations have already hardened

• Smooth relations between districts, cultures, patrols, or allies with old grudges

+10 with shared ground or mutual enemy; −20 if speaking into long-standing resentment

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POLEARMS (Grace) — [Combat, Melee, Reach]

Polearms covers spears, hooks, pikes, long-shafts, and all weapons that keep trouble farther away than it would prefer. In Limbo, this skill is especially valuable in stairwells, canalside paths, bridge entries, and tunnel mouths where reach turns one nervous little guardian into a respectable barrier. It includes thrusting, setting against charges, dragging with hooks, and controlling space with an extended point. Polearms are less elegant than necessary and more useful than fashionable.

• Fight with spears, hooks, pikes, forked poles, and long tunnel-tools used as weapons
+10 when controlling a doorway, bridge, or narrow lane; −20 if an enemy gets fully inside your reach

• Set against charging beasts, hounds, boars, or reckless humanoids
+10 if braced and ready; −20 if surprised or forced to turn suddenly

• Pull, pin, trip, or drag using hook heads and haft leverage
+10 against off-balance targets; −20 against heavy or many-limbed creatures

• Strike over low barriers, railings, fungus beds, canal edges, or front-line allies
+10 with elevation or line control; −20 in dense crowds or clutter

• Keep dangerous natural attacks at bay while allies reposition
+10 against simple rush attackers; −20 against teleporting, phasing, or swarming foes

• Use the haft defensively when the point cannot be brought to bear
+10 if well-trained; −20 if the weapon is oversized or awkward indoors

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PORTAL DETECTION (Awareness) — [Arcane, Perception]

Portal Detection is the trained sensitivity to the signs of a passage: the pressure in the ears, the wrong draft, the seam in the room, the emotional pull, the taste of static, the shift in sound where distance behaves like a lie. In **CREEPS!**, this skill is fundamental. It is how one notices hidden portals, sick portals, sleeping portals, and the dangerous kind that look stable because they want to be trusted. A good detector is often the first one in the room to stop smiling.

• Notice the presence of a hidden, dormant, or partially masked portal
+10 in quiet spaces with time to inspect; −20 in noise, crowding, or heavy magical interference

• Read whether a portal feels calm, hungry, strained, wounded, or on the edge of breach
+10 with previous contact or records; −20 if the portal is disguised or fluctuating rapidly

• Identify direction, pull, and local influence of a passage on nearby space
+10 in simple architecture; −20 in mirrored corridors, vertical shafts, or places with multiple active seams

• Detect portal taint on objects, rooms, footprints, or people who recently crossed
+10 with fresh sign; −20 if the crossing occurred long ago or under concealment rituals

• Sense the difference between a natural weak point and a deliberately opened route

+10 when examining the frame or threshold; −20 at range or through barriers

• Recognize when a room is not currently a portal but is dangerously close to becoming one
+10 if the signs have been seen before; −20 if emotions, children, or spellwork are complicating the field

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PORTAL ENGINEERING (Intellect) — [Arcane, Technical, Specialist]

Portal Engineering is the science and craft of frames, anchors, thresholds, stabilizers, seals, tuning arrays, and all the practical structures that let a breach behave like a route instead of a wound. It is one of the defining skills of the Vigil and one of the most dangerous to misuse, because failure rarely happens politely. In **CREEPS!**, an engineer is equal parts mechanic, ritualist, surveyor, and disaster worker. This skill handles repair, reinforcement, diagnosis, shutdowns, emergency routing, and all the little adjustments that prevent a district from discovering what "widening event" means.

• Inspect portal frames, anchor points, seal-lines, and resonance structures for faults
+10 with records, tools, and a stable site; −20 under active surge, collapse risk, or enemy pressure

• Repair or reinforce a weak passage before it worsens
+10 for minor damage and proper materials; −20 for major instability, missing components, or live breach conditions

• Install emergency braces, dampeners, or field fixes during an Alert
+10 with a prepared team; −20 if working solo or improvising from salvage

• Shut down, redirect, or partially suppress a portal without destroying it
+10 if the design is known; −20 if the frame is alien, ancient, or emotionally active

• Read cause-of-failure from fracture pattern, pressure rhythm, and threshold behavior
+10 when undisturbed and methodical; −20 if trying to diagnose while the passage is still behaving badly

• Build or adapt local structures so a portal can be watched, used, or survived
+10 in calm workshop conditions; −20 in field conditions where the floor may have opinions

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RIDING (Grace) — [Travel, Physical]

Riding covers mounted movement, balance, command, and practical combat or travel from the back of something that does not share your preferred sense of caution. In **CREEPS!**, mounts are often strange, stubborn, or both: dray beasts, tunnel crawlers, goats, fungal sled-pullers, and occasionally something that should not morally be described as "rideable" but technically allows it. This skill includes staying on, steering well, and getting the animal through places that even you dislike. Good Riding is partnership under pressure, not just not falling off.

• Ride safely at normal pace through roads, alleys, ramps, tunnels, and open terraces
+10 on a trained, familiar mount; −20 on a frightened, injured, or barely broken beast

• Keep control during noise, combat, panic, fire, crowding, or unstable ground
+10 with a calm animal and room to move; −20 in choke points, flames, or magical terror

• Guide mounts around obstacles, through rubble, over shallow water, or along risky edges
+10 if moving cautiously; −20 at speed or in darkness

• Fight, cast, signal, or shoot from the saddle
+10 at a steady pace; −20 at full run, on sharp turns, or on a mount not trained for battle

• Leap small barriers, descend steep ramps, or handle abrupt direction changes
+10 with warning and open route; −20 if the animal is surprised or badly positioned

• Calm, dismount, remount, or recover from a near-throw in dangerous conditions
+10 with proper tack and training; −20 while carrying gear, child, or wounded ally

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RUNES & GLYPHS (Intellect) — [Arcane, Knowledge, Specialist]

Runes & Glyphs covers magical script, symbols, seals, thresholds, marks of passage, protective circles, ward-lines, warning sigils, and all the written shapes that tell reality what to do if it can be convinced to read. In Limbo, runes appear in street metalwork, old stones, school walls, trap frames, shrine floors, and hidden places where people hoped no one would ever need to touch them again. This skill includes reading, copying, repairing, identifying, and safely disturbing them. The wrong line in the wrong place can be a door, a bomb, or a rude joke from a dead wizard.

• Read common magical signs, warnings, ward symbols, and institutional marks
+10 for familiar Vigil forms; −20 for archaic, damaged, or foreign scripts

• Identify the purpose of a rune array, lock glyph, trap seal, or active ward
+10 with clear, complete lines; −20 if scorched, partially erased, or layered over other symbols

• Copy, trace, repair, or redraw simple symbols without changing their effect
+10 with stable surface and time; −20 on curved, wet, moving, or unstable material

• Disturb or break hostile glyphs without setting them off badly
+10 with proper tools and warning; −20 if rushed or working mid-combat

• Leave clear magical markers for allies, patrols, or follow-up teams
+10 for standard field signs; −20 if trying to hide the mark from hostile readers

• Compare unknown script to known magical traditions and infer likely use
+10 if supported by books, notes, or previous sightings; −20 if the script is dream-mutated or intentionally deceptive

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SCHOLAR (Intellect) — [Knowledge]

Scholar is broad disciplined learning: research habits, reading comprehension, note comparison, context retention, cross-referencing, and the quiet endurance required to sit with difficult material until it stops being useless. It is the generalist's knowledge skill, less specialized than the various Lore fields but often more flexible in practice. In **CREEPS!**, Scholar is what lets someone move from "we found a document" to "we understand what part of this is real, useful, and likely to get us chased." A scholar is rarely the loudest person in the room, but often the one everyone looks at when the old paper starts answering back.

• Research a subject across notes, books, records, ledgers, and mixed sources
+10 with time, quiet, and multiple references; −20 when rushed or working from fragments alone

• Compare conflicting accounts and pull out the most likely truth or pattern

+10 if one source is clearly stronger; −20 when every witness or text is lying differently

• Recall general historical, magical, cultural, or procedural facts not covered by narrower Lore skills
+10 for common education topics; −20 for highly specialized or restricted material

• Organize findings into useful briefings, reports, or theories others can actually follow
+10 with notes and support; −20 if trying to explain while events are still happening

• Recognize when a clue belongs to a broader pattern rather than standing alone
+10 with several connected clues in hand; −20 if forced to extrapolate from one strange scrap

• Spend downtime extracting practical value from archives, classrooms, or recovered documents
+10 in proper academic spaces; −20 in field conditions where the pages won't stop getting wet

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SHIELDS (Grace) — [Combat, Defense]

Shields covers the practical defense of boards, bucklers, strapped plates, improvised lids, and all the things a small guardian wedges between themselves and disaster. It includes blocking, angling, crowding a foe's line, and turning a killing blow into a bruise and bad language. In Limbo, shields are especially valued in stair fights, breach holds, and escort scenes where something behind you matters more than your own skin. Good shield-work is humble, unglamorous, and often heroic.

• Block melee blows, deflect missiles, and spoil clean lines of attack
+10 when braced and expecting the strike; −20 if flanked, surprised, or attacked from above

• Hold a narrow lane, doorway, bridge, or threshold against pressure
+10 in a proper chokepoint; −20 on unstable footing or in deep water

• Protect a child, civilian, Companion, or ritual circle from direct harm
+10 if stationary and focused; −20 while moving or turning repeatedly

• Bash, shove, or crowd enemies off angle without fully attacking
+10 against light or off-balance foes; −20 against larger anchored opponents

• Advance carefully under ranged pressure or hostile fragments from a portal
+10 with cover and discipline; −20 if visibility is poor or footing treacherous

• Endure breath, debris, or unstable burst effects with correct timing and stance
+10 with warning; −20 against area effects that surround rather than strike

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SLEIGHT OF HAND (Grace) — [Subterfuge, Utility]

Sleight of Hand is precision manipulation with fingers, claws, palms, sleeves, and timing. It covers palming keys, lifting purses, tucking notes into pockets, switching items during conversation, and all the petty miracles of a practiced little thief. In **CREEPS!**, it also includes handling fragile components without breaking them and nicking things from creatures too big to notice at first. This skill is equal parts dexterity and disrespect.

• Palm small objects, hide evidence, or produce a tool from concealment
+10 with loose clothing, sleeves, or table cover; −20 under close observation

• Pickpocket, lift keys, remove charms, or steal a token unnoticed
+10 in crowding or distraction; −20 from belt loops, chains, or wary targets

• Switch one item for another during trade, inspection, or social exchange
+10 with rehearsal; −20 if the items differ sharply in weight or shape

• Handle delicate components, fuses, powders, or wards without smearing them
+10 with proper tools; −20 while rushed or under shaking conditions

• Plant evidence, tokens, or tracking dust on another person
+10 if contact is expected; −20 if target distrusts you already

• Make quick manipulations in combat-adjacent situations—draw, pass, stash, flick
+10 if the action is part of movement; −20 while grappled or pinned

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SMUGGLING (Awareness) — [Subterfuge, Urban, Specialist]

Smuggling is the movement of things and people where they are not meant to go: goods through routes, truths through districts, children through safer exits, relics past inspection, and oneself past the kind of attention that ends in paperwork or knives. It overlaps with Streetwise, Navigation, and Deception, but focuses on practical clandestine transit. In **CREEPS!**, smugglers know routes, timings, hiding methods, habits of inspection, and when not to move because the city itself has become too alert. It is less glamorous than rumor suggests and much more about planning.

• Move contraband, evidence, creatures, or small persons through monitored territory
+10 with a prepared route and cover story; −20 during crackdown, curfew, or active district search

• Hide objects on the body, in loads, carts, walls, containers, or routine movement
+10 if the concealment fits the context; −20 if the cargo glows, leaks, smells, or complains

• Use back routes, service ways, drains, rooftops, market chaos, or crowd flow to avoid inspection
+10 if the route is current and known; −20 after recent changes, raids, or collapses

• Judge the right time to move based on patrol rhythm, public noise, weather, and local attention
+10 with local support and watchers; −20 if forced to move during a visible crisis

• Escort vulnerable people through danger without drawing exactly the wrong kind of notice
+10 if the escort can cooperate and stay quiet; −20 with panicked children, wounded adults, or awkward companions

• Tell when a route is blown, watched, or already being used by someone more dangerous
+10 with fresh information; −20 if relying on old assumptions in a live district

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SORCERY (Intellect) — [Arcane, Specialist]

Sorcery is the disciplined use of learned magic: spell structure, focus, shaping, and the dangerous habit of making reality comply just long enough to be useful. In **CREEPS!**, sorcery is not clean. It leaks from portals, sticks to old stone, pools in dream-heavy districts, and occasionally throws back what you ask of it with insultingly personal timing. This skill covers the casting of formal spells, the handling of unstable magical force, and the practical knowledge needed not to

explode yourself in front of a child. Most sorcerers are confident until exactly the wrong moment.

• Cast known spells under normal conditions using proper words, shapes, and materials
+10 in calm, stable, warded spaces; −20 under pressure, injury, panic, or active instability

• Sustain, shape, or direct magic while moving, hiding, or fighting
+10 if the effect is minor or rehearsed; −20 if split between multiple threats or distractions

(failure with this can still be recouped with a successful Concentration skill use, if applicable)

• Push a spell slightly beyond comfort in range, force, duration, or precision
−10 for a modest push; −20 for an aggressive one that courts backlash

• Counter, sense, or interfere with active hostile magic
+10 against familiar effects; −20 against ancient, alien, or ritual-scale workings

• Channel energy safely enough not to damage yourself, your Companion, or the furniture
+10 with proper implements and setup; −20 around broken portals, Hollow Seams, or dream surges

• Perform quick practical magic during an Alert where failure has social consequences as well as physical ones
+10 if prepared and backed by a second caster; −20 if improvising from memory in chaos

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SPELUNKING (Awareness) — [Travel, Specialist]

Spelunking is the practical expertise of cave travel: reading stone, judging crawlspaces, knowing where air comes from, hearing void behind walls, and not trusting the floor because it looked cooperative. It differs from Survival and Navigation by focusing on the cave itself as a living geometry of hazards, routes, and signs. In Limbo, caves are not always natural, but the same habits help: test before weight, listen before shouting, and never assume the old map was ever honest. This skill belongs to people who have learned to think like tunnels.

• Move safely through caverns, shafts, root-cuts, sink passages, and unstable underground routes
+10 with chalk, line, or proper lamps; −20 in recent collapse zones or dream-shifted stone

• Judge whether a tunnel is safe, hollow behind, likely to collapse, or worth widening
+10 when given time to inspect; −20 during tremors, crowd movement, or combat

• Find hidden side-passages, air vents, drainage channels, and crawl routes
+10 with good airflow or sound cues; −20 in flood-noise, steam, or magical interference

• Ascend or descend cave terrain using natural features and practical route choice
+10 in dry conditions; −20 on wet, crumbling, or polished stone

• Interpret cave signs such as soot marks, mineral seams, claw scraping, and water memory
+10 in natural caverns; −20 in heavily built, repaired, or disguised passages

• Lead others through deep or unfamiliar underground terrain without losing the line
+10 with known anchors; −20 if carrying lights that reveal too much or too little

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STEALTH (Grace) — [Subterfuge]

Stealth is the quiet art of not being where trouble thinks you are. It covers silent movement, hiding, timing, shadow use, patience, and knowing which sounds matter in Limbo: the drip, the hiss, the ratchet, the soft portal-hum that can swallow a

misplaced footstep. In **CREEPS!**, stealth often means surviving things larger than you, crueler than you, or both. It is also the skill of watching before choosing whether to run, strike, or eavesdrop.

• Move unseen through alleys, fungal groves, abandoned chambers, and enemy-held passages
+10 in darkness, mist, clutter, or crowd noise; −20 over loose debris or under bright light

• Hide behind crates, curtains, root masses, machinery, or broken furniture
+10 if still and patient; −20 if the enemy is actively searching

• Shadow a target through Lantern Streets, market tunnels, or Vigil corridors
+10 in crowds; −20 in open walkways or reflective flooring

• Approach a creature or portal quietly enough to examine it at close range
+10 against distracted or sleeping targets; −20 against alert predators or spirits

• Conceal gear, companions, or stolen objects while moving
+10 for small, dark, soft gear; −20 for clanking, glowing, or wet equipment

• Set up an ambush in ruin, grave corridor, closet frame, or broken tenement
+10 if prepared in advance; −20 if rushed or with too many participants

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STREETWISE (Awareness) — [Social, Urban]

Streetwise is practical city sense: who runs which lane, what symbols matter, where stolen goods move, which block is quiet because everyone is hiding, and which corner belongs to someone more dangerous than they look. In Limbo, that means knowing the Lantern Streets, the Lower Warrens, canal rumor routes, black-market habits, and the little unwritten laws that make the difference between tolerated and stabbed. This skill is social navigation with dirt under the nails. It belongs to those who survive cities by reading them as organisms.

• Find fences, smugglers, informants, lookouts, and after-hours trade routes
+10 in districts you know or can blend into; −20 in hostile, closed, or recently raided neighborhoods

• Read local tensions, gang markings, district etiquette, and who currently has the advantage
+10 when the signs are fresh and public; −20 if control has changed hands quietly

• Know where to ask for contraband, silence, forged access, or unofficial transport
+10 with the right bribe or introductions; −20 if carrying obvious Vigil authority

• Blend into markets, alleys, crowds, and rough social environments without drawing heat
+10 if dressed and acting the part; −20 if visibly out of place or overly clean

• Hear the rumor before the report: portal glitches, missing kids, vanished patrols, bad shipments
+10 if spending time and coin; −20 if expecting answers from people who owe you nothing

• Identify which local nuisance is harmless, which is trouble, and which is somebody's cousin
+10 with past experience in the district; −20 during riots, crackdowns, or panic

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SURVIVAL (Endurance) — [Wilderness, Utility]

Survival is the practical knowledge of staying alive in places that are cold, damp, hungry, poisonous, lightless, or all five at once. In **CREEPS!**, it covers making shelter in broken districts, rationing food in long watch-cycles, identifying immediate hazards, and enduring the unpleasant fact that Limbo is not interested in your comfort. It is the skill of knowing which noises matter, which puddles kill, which fungi feed, and which winds mean something large is moving nearby. A Creep with Survival may still be miserable, but they are usually miserable on purpose and in a useful direction.

• Endure exposure, hunger, exhaustion, cold seep, and poor shelter in hostile regions
+10 with proper gear, known camp spots, or calm conditions; −20 in active storms, instability zones, or with inadequate supplies

• Build temporary shelter from debris, fungus mats, crate wood, cloth, or canal junk
+10 with time and materials; −20 if rushed, wet, or under threat

• Recognize immediate environmental threats such as thin flooring, rot, sink-moss, or bad air
+10 if moving carefully in daylight or steady lantern-light; −20 in panic, darkness, or magical distortion

• Keep a small group functional during a prolonged watch, pursuit, or district lockdown
+10 with fire, food, and a known route; −20 if escorting wounded, civilians, or children

• Manage rest, pacing, and safe pauses while traveling through dangerous territory
+10 with previous experience in the region; −20 when forced to move continuously

• Survive outside structured Vigil support in the wild edges of Limbo or beyond
+10 if the terrain is natural and readable; −20 in surreal, dream-shifted, or recently ruptured zones

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SWIM (Endurance) — [Physical, Water]

Swim covers movement through canals, blackwater basins, drowned portal chambers, rain-flooded streets, and the cold underground waterways of Limbo. It is not merely graceful paddling; it includes breath control, panic resistance, staying afloat while clothed, and the miserable labor of not being dragged under by things that live where the light doesn't reach. Many Creeps hate deep water, and the skill reflects not comfort but competence. Where Stillwaters and lake terraces are concerned, this skill is the line between transit and disappearance.

• Cross canals, reservoir chambers, flood tunnels, and terrace pools

+10 in calm water; −20 in strong current, undertow, or heavy gear

• Stay afloat while wounded, frightened, or carrying a small item or child
+10 with a float, pole, or tether; −20 if panicking or surprised

• Dive beneath a surface to retrieve an object, inspect a portal frame, or avoid danger
+10 in clear water; −20 in murk, reeds, blood-cloud, or magical distortion

• Swim quietly to avoid attracting lake creatures or water spirits
+10 at night with still surface; −20 in chop, current, or when exhausted

• Resist being dragged by current, tentacles, nets, or collapsing spill-gates
+10 if braced to rope or structure; −20 if struck or entangled first

• Navigate submerged passageways or short underwater tunnels
+10 if previously mapped; −20 in total darkness or unstable portal runoff

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TACTICS (Intellect) — [Combat, Knowledge]

Tactics is applied battlefield thinking: positioning, timing, focus targets, retreat routes, choke points, ambush logic, threat priority, and the useful discipline of noticing that the room itself is on somebody's side. It differs from raw fighting skill by operating one layer above the blow. In **CREEPS!**, tactics matters because Creeps are often small, outmatched, under-equipped, or trying not to get the child eaten while the engineer fixes the door. A tactician wins ugly situations and leaves with more allies standing.

• Read the battlefield and identify strong positions, weak lines, and likely danger points
+10 with a moment to assess; −20 if surprised, outflanked, or operating in chaos

• Direct allies toward effective targets, routes, and roles in a fight
+10 with trained companions or patrols; −20 if the group is scattered, frightened, or undisciplined

• Set ambushes, retreats, delaying actions, or layered responses before contact
+10 with preparation and terrain knowledge; −20 if the enemy arrives early or strangely

• Identify the real threat in a mixed fight: caster, beast, brute, portal, or idiot with lantern
+10 when the enemy acts according to type; −20 when they deliberately behave unpredictably

• Use the environment—bridges, alleys, shafts, barricades, furniture, canal edges—to your advantage
+10 in familiar ground; −20 in shifting, unstable, or dream-reactive areas

• Preserve the mission objective while still fighting effectively
+10 if the group knows the priority; −20 if too many goals compete at once

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TRACKING (Awareness) — [Wilderness, Investigation]

Tracking is the reading of passage: footprints, claw marks, displaced fungus, oil-smears, broken twigs, ash drag, bent railgrass, disturbed dust, and the little betrayals of movement left behind by the living and not-quite-living alike. In Limbo, tracks are not always physical; some are heat, dream residue, scent, or rhythm. This skill reflects the ability to follow what has passed through a place and to understand what kind of thing made the signs. A good tracker notices

not only where the target went, but how frightened, wounded, hurried, or angry it was when it passed.

• Follow footprints, claw marks, drag trails, spoor, and disturbed surfaces
+10 on soft ground, dust, mud, or spore-beds; −20 on stone, in crowds, or after heavy traffic

• Track through districts, alleys, tunnels, and layered urban clutter
+10 with a known starting point; −20 where many similar tracks overlap

• Read speed, number, burden, and emotional state from the trail left behind
+10 if the signs are fresh and obvious; −20 if trying to infer too much from little

• Follow blood trails, dripping slime, broken lantern oil, or magical leakage
+10 with strong sign; −20 if rain, flood, or canal spray has washed the area

• Pursue beasts, Trespassers, truants, or retreating enemy scouts through mixed terrain
+10 if aided by a hound, companion, or witness; −20 if the target is intentionally covering their route

• Distinguish false trails, loops, or planted clues from a true line of movement
+10 if the target is clumsy or panicked; −20 against trained scouts, smugglers, or dream-born mimics

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TRAPMAKING (Intellect) — [Technical, Subterfuge, Specialist]

Trapmaking is the art of setting a consequence in advance and arranging for someone else to discover it the hard way. It covers snares, noise-lines, spring devices, deadfalls, latch tricks, collapsing supports, flash-bursts, and all the mean little surprises that make a passage less welcoming than it first appeared.

In **CREEPS!**, traps are often less about killing and more about delaying, warning, embarrassing, or softening something nastier than you before it reaches your district. A well-made trap reflects planning, local knowledge, and a slightly vindictive imagination.

• Build simple warning traps, trip-lines, bells, and detection rigs
+10 with tools, anchor points, and time; −20 if rushed or forced to improvise in bare space

• Set snares, pin traps, swing hazards, and movement-denial devices in likely paths
+10 in choke points or obvious routes; −20 in open areas with many ways around

• Prepare layered trap zones that separate or delay pursuers
+10 with prior layout knowledge and support; −20 if trying to conceal too much too quickly

• Rig distractions, flashes, noise bursts, or false hazards to control movement
+10 against panicky or inexperienced targets; −20 against cautious engineers, scouts, or creatures with unusual senses

• Make safe ways around your own traps for allies, escorts, or retreat
+10 if marked and rehearsed; −20 if the route must remain secret even from your side

• Assess where an enemy trap-setter would logically place their work
+10 if the site is familiar; −20 if the enemy thinks very differently from you, which is always rude

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TUNNEL FIGHTING (Grace) — [Combat, Specialist]

Tunnel Fighting is the practiced violence of close, ugly, low-ceilinged places: pipe-runs, crawlways, cellar corridors, sewer entries, root-chokes, and all the

mean little spaces where Limbo insists most real work gets done. It includes striking without a full swing, controlling corners, using walls as allies, and never wasting motion where there is no room for it. This is not a noble style. It is a survivor's style.

• Fight effectively in cramped corridors, crawlspaces, stairwells, and vents
+10 when the space truly limits everyone equally; −20 if your weapon or body needs room

• Turn corners safely under threat from ambushers or hidden claws
+10 with a shield, mirror, or scout; −20 in unknown dark with multiple angles

• Jam larger enemies in bottlenecks where they cannot bring full force to bear
+10 against oversized creatures in narrow lanes; −20 once they break into open room

• Use walls, low ceilings, pipes, and rails to gain leverage in melee
+10 if familiar with the environment; −20 in shifting or collapsing tunnels

• Coordinate close movement with an ally so you do not block or stab each other
+10 with drill or prior teamwork; −20 in panic retreat

• Fight while half-crouched, kneeling, or squeezed sideways through an opening
+10 if trained for it; −20 if exhausted or burdened

VIGIL PROCEDURES (Intellect) — [Institutional]

Vigil Procedures covers official practice: alert codes, response order, reporting formats, chain of command, quarantine habits, containment doctrine, district rules, emergency priorities, artifact handling, witness management, and the thousand irritations of a large organization trying not to be surprised by the same horror twice. In **CREEPS!**, this skill is not glamorous, but it is often what keeps a local problem from becoming a regional one. Procedure is the memory of the Vigil made usable. Sometimes the correct form truly is the difference between "contained" and "investigated later in several bags."

• Follow correct response order during Trespasser, Truant, or Invasion alerts
+10 for standard incidents and clear authority; −20 in novel situations or chain-of-command confusion

• Know when to report, isolate, evacuate, seal, escort, or wait for specialists
+10 with complete information; −20 when making the call under time pressure and incomplete facts

• Handle evidence, contaminated objects, witness statements, and breach records correctly
+10 in controlled environments; −20 when the scene is mobile, hostile, or politically sensitive

• Coordinate with engineers, medics, scribes, and field patrols according to established practice
+10 with a cooperative team; −20 if personalities, jurisdictions, or panic interfere

• Recognize official markings, restricted zones, archival designations, and emergency symbols
+10 with familiarity in the district; −20 for obsolete, damaged, or deliberately altered markings

• Avoid procedural mistakes that create legal, magical, or bureaucratic fallout later
+10 when allowed to do it properly; −20 when forced to improvise around impossible circumstances

CHAPTER 4: DESTINY IN CREEPS!

There are nights in Limbo when skill is not enough.

That is not an insult to skill. Skill matters. It matters a great deal. A steady shield arm matters. A practiced lockpick matters. A correctly placed ward-line matters. The ability to smell a bad portal before it opens like a rotten grin matters very much indeed. Creeps live and die by what they know how to do. The Vigil survives because its members learn, drill, remember, adapt, and keep doing useful things long after softer creatures would have hidden under the bed and called the whole district a loss.

But there are still moments when the world lurches.

A hatch slips anyway.
A child chooses exactly the wrong instant to run.
A Dream Passage twitches wider just as the final line of the seal is spoken.
The Goblin lies better than it has any right to.
The lantern goes out.
The floor gives.
The witness screams.
The thing in the canal was not alone.

And sometimes, in those moments, a Creep still finds a way.

That is Destiny.

Destiny is not merely luck, though from the outside it may look alarmingly similar. It is not ordinary talent, nor planning, nor calm technique, though it often appears through all three. It is the force that lets a protagonist press back against the cruel shape of a moment and say, in effect, **no, not like this**. It is the hand on the edge of the door just before it slams. The last instant of nerve before panic wins. The impossible little reserve of steadiness that allows the right word, the right strike, the right warning, the right turn, the right grab, the right lie, the right choice to arrive exactly when the scene most wanted it absent.

In a setting like **CREEPS!**, Destiny matters because Limbo is unfair in deeply specific ways.

It is unfair to children.
It is unfair to districts that were finally having a tolerable week.
It is unfair to underpaid Wardens, overworked Engineers, exhausted Night Schoolers, and anyone trying to explain to a superior why the closet is screaming again.
It is unfair to those who do everything right and still find their corridor full of teeth.

Destiny exists because a One-on-One protagonist is not merely another body in the setting. A player character in **CREEPS!** is still fragile, still limited, still very much capable of being frightened, cornered, outnumbered, and humiliated by circumstances. But they are also the center of the story. Destiny is one of the clearest expressions of that truth. It is the

mechanic that says this Creep can push harder than the moment expected.

It does not guarantee safety.

That is important.

Destiny is not immunity. It does not exist to erase consequence, flatten suspense, or trivialize hard scenes. A Creep who spends Destiny may still fail. They may still bleed, panic, drop the satchel, lose the witness, bungle the lie, or find themselves clinging one-handed to a pipe over black canal water while their companion makes noises of useless concern from somewhere above. Destiny does not remove the darkness from the setting. What it does is allow a protagonist to exert narrative force against it.

That distinction matters, especially in **CREEPS!**, where tone lives in the tension between courage and smallness, competence and panic, humor and genuine unease. Creeps are not invulnerable heroes. They are odd little guardians in a world that keeps needing them at the worst possible hour. Destiny should feel like that. It should not feel grand, shining, or mythically effortless. It should feel stubborn. Personal. A bit desperate. Occasionally impressive in a way the Creep themselves will absolutely refuse to discuss later if anyone tries to sound sentimental about it.

What Destiny Is

Destiny is a limited player resource that allows the protagonist to directly alter the odds in moments that matter.

Mechanically, Destiny is spent to modify rolls.

Each point of Destiny may be used to provide:

- **+10 to the Creep's own roll**
- and/or **−10 to an opposing roll**, where appropriate

Destiny can stack. A player may spend multiple points in the same moment if they have them available and if the stakes justify it.

This means a player may:

- spend 1 Destiny for **+10**
- spend 2 Destiny for **+20**
- spend 1 Destiny to impose **−10** on an opponent
- spend multiple points to both aid their own test and hinder the opposition

Destiny is not a separate kind of test. It does not change the structure of task resolution. The Creep still rolls normally, and the world still answers honestly. Destiny simply lets the player lean on the scale when the scene is worth the strain.

What Destiny Represents in the Fiction

Different Creeps experience Destiny differently.

For one Operative, Destiny may look like refusing to yield the doorway even after the shield arm has gone half numb.
For a Portal Engineer, it may appear as the impossible clarity to see the one cracked anchor line that matters.
For a Dastard, it may be that perfect turn of the wrist, that impossible social instinct, that one lie so well-timed even they are offended by how smoothly it worked.
For a Binder-Kin, it may be the heartbeat of warning from a bonded companion just before the hidden thing lunges.
For a Night Schooler, it may be memory surfacing through terror: one line of old doctrine, one buried warning, one ritual sequence their exhausted mind had no right to recall in time.

In all cases, Destiny represents the protagonist pressing themselves into the moment hard enough to alter its shape.

The Creepmaster should never feel required to describe Destiny as magical unless the character's concept strongly leans that way. It may be:

- grit
- instinct
- timing
- courage
- emotional refusal
- uncanny luck
- trained reflex
- spiritual resilience
- bond resonance
- dream-defiance
- or some deeply embarrassing combination of all of the above

The exact language should suit the character and the tone of the scene.

Starting Destiny

Beginning Creeps start with the normal One-on-One Destiny assumption:

- **Starting Destiny: 3**
- **Maximum Destiny: 3**

This means a new protagonist begins play with a small but significant reserve of narrative force. They are not expected to use Destiny casually. Two points is enough to change a scene, rescue a bad moment, or force a roll that would otherwise likely go the wrong way. It is not enough to solve every problem by brute spending.

That is by design.

Destiny should feel precious.

If the player spends it too early, they may later face the seal break, the witness panic, the collapsing stair, the black-market betrayal, or the combat reversal with empty hands. If they hoard it too carefully, they may lose the very scene it was meant to save. The tension between using and conserving Destiny is part of what makes it effective.

When Destiny May Be Spent

Destiny may be spent whenever the player is making or contesting a meaningful roll and wishes to shift the odds.

Most commonly, this includes:

- skill tests
- direct Attribute tests
- Contests
- combat rolls
- resistance moments where the Creepmaster permits Destiny expenditure
- urgent scene actions tied to Clocks, portals, witnesses, or collapsing conditions

In general, the player should declare Destiny spending **before the roll is made**, once the stakes and relevant modifiers are clear.

For opposed situations, Destiny may also be spent to penalize the other side's roll, when the fiction supports that direct pressure.

Examples:

- a Warden spends Destiny to hold the line at the exact instant the attacker commits

- a Scryer spends Destiny to resist a nightmare's psychic pressure
- a Dastard spends Destiny to make a suspicious broker hesitate at exactly the right phrase
- a Tracker spends Destiny to spot the break in the trail before losing it entirely
- an Enchanter spends Destiny to force the spell structure to hold together one breath longer

The principle is simple: Destiny belongs in moments where the player decides **this matters too much to leave untouched**.

Spending Destiny on Your Own Roll

The most straightforward use of Destiny is to improve your own chances.

Each point spent gives **+10** to the relevant roll.

This bonus is applied directly to the modified value being rolled against.

Example

A Binder-Kin is trying to calm a panicked child in a room already going dream-soft around the edges. The Creepmaster calls for a **Persuasion** test with a **−10** penalty because the child is frightened and half-looking at the wrong wall.

The Creep's current modified value would leave the roll dangerously uncertain. The player spends **1 Destiny**, adding **+10**, and rolls with the revised chance.

In the fiction, this might mean the Binder-Kin finds the exact right tone of voice, or their companion edges into view at just the right moment, distracting the child from bolting toward the passage.

Spending Destiny Against an Opponent

Destiny may also be used to penalize an opposing roll by **−10** per point spent, where appropriate.

This use is especially powerful in Contests and dangerous opposed scenes.

Example

A Dastard is trying to bluff a black-market broker who is becoming suspicious. The broker rolls against Insight. The player spends **1 Destiny** to impose **−10** on the broker's roll.

In the fiction, this may mean the Dastard spots the broker's insecurity and presses it, or notices the right name to mention, or times the lie so perfectly that the broker's attention shifts just long enough to poison their judgment.

This kind of spending should feel active and personal. The protagonist is not merely getting lucky. They are applying pressure exactly where the opposing will or attention is weakest.

Splitting Destiny Between Both Sides of the Moment

One of the strongest uses of Destiny is to spend it in both directions at once.

A player may spend Destiny to:

- improve their own roll
- and hinder the opposition

This can create a sharp dramatic swing.

Example

A Portal Engineer is in a Contest against a failing threshold during a desperate stabilization attempt. The Creepmaster calls for the relevant portal procedure roll and judges the breach itself as an opposing force in the scene.

The player spends **2 Destiny**:

- **+10** to their own roll
- **−10** to the opposing pressure

This is mechanically powerful and fictionally vivid. The Engineer is not merely competent. They are forcing the frame to behave through technical clarity, nerve, and perhaps a little professional spite.

Stacking Destiny

Destiny stacks.

If a player has the points available and wishes to spend them, they may use multiple points on the same moment.

That means a Creep may push for:

- **+20** on their own roll
- **−20** on an opponent
- or a split between the two

This should not be treated lightly. Spending multiple Destiny points at once means the player is making a deliberate statement: **this is the moment that matters**.

The Creepmaster should respect that statement. A player burning most or all of their Destiny reserve is announcing that the scene has become central.

That does not mean success is guaranteed. It does mean the moment deserves to land hard.

Destiny and Degrees of Success

Destiny alters the odds, but because **CREEPS!** uses Degrees of Success and Failure, its impact often extends beyond simple pass-or-fail.

A Destiny-spent success may become:

- a much stronger Degree of Success
- a cleaner Lesser Win
- a more decisive result in a Contest
- a larger step forward on a progress Clock
- a narrower failure transformed into real success
- a near-disaster softened into a manageable problem

This is one reason Destiny is so powerful in **CREEPS!** despite the modest starting pool. A +10 is not merely ten points. It may be the difference between:

- failing and succeeding
- barely succeeding and strongly succeeding
- losing a Contest and winning it
- buying one Clock step and buying three

A small mechanical push can produce a very large fictional change.

Destiny and Critical Results

Destiny does not change the actual number shown on the dice. A roll of **01–05** is still a Critical Success, and a roll of **95–100** is still a Critical Failure.

However, Destiny can help a Creep avoid reaching a bad roll state in the first place, or make a successful roll more likely to land in the range where the rest of the scene becomes manageable.

If a player spends Destiny and still rolls a Critical Failure, the moment should feel especially rough. The Creep pushed hard, and the world still answered badly. That is painful, but it is honest to the system and to the tone.

If a player spends Destiny and lands a Critical Success, the Creepmaster should strongly consider emphasizing the force of will, timing, or sheer improbable guardianship that made the moment happen. In **CREEPS!**, those are the scenes people tell stories about later in kitchens, workshops, and half-empty district canteens.

Usually with some embellishment. Usually while leaving out how frightened everyone actually was.

Destiny in Combat

Combat is one of the clearest arenas for Destiny, but it should not be the only one.

In combat, Destiny may be spent to:

- land a hit that must land
- avoid losing a Contest that would shift the whole fight
- preserve control of a doorway
- force through a disarm, grapple, or shove
- survive a reversal
- keep a hostile creature from reaching a witness, child, or engineer
- turn a desperate defensive moment into a narrow but real edge

Because **CREEPS!** often places combat inside larger scene stakes, Destiny spent in combat should usually feel connected to more than just damage.

An Operative may spend Destiny not because they want to hit harder, but because if they fail, the thing gets past them and reaches the child.
A Warden may spend it because the line cannot break here.
A Binder-Kin may spend it because their companion is in danger.
A Tracker may spend it because if the target escapes this corridor, the whole district is back under threat by morning.

In other words, Destiny in combat should remain tied to why the fight matters.

Destiny in Social Scenes

Social scenes in **CREEPS!** are excellent places for Destiny, and Creepmasters should not overlook that.

A great deal of the setting's real danger comes not from claws and teeth, but from:

- panic
- suspicion
- denial
- bad timing
- frightened witnesses
- black-market etiquette failures
- district elders refusing to listen
- children deciding the wrong person feels safest
- a crowd crossing the line between anxious and unmanageable

Destiny may be spent in these moments just as meaningfully as in battle.

A player might spend Destiny to:

- say the one sentence that gets through
- keep a witness from shutting down
- resist a manipulator's pressure
- hold together a public speech in a failing district
- bluff past someone who absolutely should not be fooled
- force themselves not to lose their temper at the worst possible time

This often produces some of the best **CREEPS!** moments, because social Destiny spending feels deeply personal. It is not always flashy. Sometimes it is simply the refusal to let fear or pride ruin the scene.

Destiny in Portal Scenes

Portal scenes are perhaps the most iconic place for Destiny in **CREEPS!**.

Threshold failures, Dream Passages, unstable closetways, seal fractures, ritual corrections, and Quiet the Realm procedures all create exactly the kind of pressure where Destiny feels right. A Creep pushing against a breach is not just solving a technical problem. They are often contesting with the room, the dream-state, the district's fear, or the raw wrongness of the event itself.

Destiny may be spent in portal scenes to:

- hold a seal line steady
- complete a ritual phrase correctly
- catch the hidden flaw in a frame
- suppress a surge before it spreads
- maintain Concentration in an escalating room
- calm a dream-reactive environment
- buy enough success to keep the Clock from filling

The fiction here should be especially rich. A Portal Engineer spending Destiny may look like impossible professional clarity. A Dreamcraft-focused Binder-Kin may seem to resonate with the room in a way they cannot explain later. A Night Schooler may reach into buried ritual memory and say exactly the thing the scene needed to hear.

Or, of course, the Creep may simply grit their teeth, swear at the door, and refuse to let Limbo be dramatic on its own terms for one more minute.

That is also valid.

When Not to Use Destiny

Destiny should not be spent on every mildly inconvenient roll.

The Creepmaster should encourage players to think of Destiny as belonging to scenes where:

- the stakes are real
- the outcome matters
- the result will change the scene sharply
- failure would produce meaningful cost
- success would preserve something important

It is usually wasted on low-stakes trivialities.

Do not spend Destiny because:

- the player dislikes mediocre rolls in principle
- the scene is not actually important
- the action could simply be tried again safely
- failure would not meaningfully matter
- the player is bored and wants something to do with the pool

Destiny works best when it is used intentionally, not habitually.

Recovering Destiny

Destiny is not meant to disappear forever. It is a renewable resource, but not a casual one.

As a default rule in **CREEPS!**, Destiny should be recovered when the Creep reaches a point of meaningful reset, completion, or emotional re-centering. This may include:

- the end of a major mission
- successful completion of an Alert or district incident

- a substantial period of safe recovery
- a true rest in safety after danger
- a major story beat where the Creep has earned a moment of restoration

The Creepmaster may also award 1 Destiny back during play for especially appropriate moments, such as:

- accepting a cost tied to the character's role or duty
- protecting others at real personal risk
- acting in a way that strongly honors the archetype or emotional heart of the character
- making a meaningful sacrifice that keeps the story moving
- enduring the scene's pressure in a way that deepens the campaign rather than flattening it

This should be done sparingly. Destiny should be replenished enough to matter, but not so freely that players cease respecting it.

Creepmaster Guidance on Destiny

The Creepmaster's role with Destiny is not to police it harshly, nor to treat it like a nuisance. It is to recognize what it is doing in the game.

Destiny says:

- this roll matters
- this moment matters
- this scene is not background
- the protagonist is pushing back against the shape of events

When a player spends Destiny, the Creepmaster should usually respond by:

- clarifying the stakes
- honoring the importance of the moment
- describing the result with appropriate weight
- letting the expenditure feel real in the fiction

This does not mean handing out success. It means treating the moment as important because the player has declared it important.

Creepmasters should also remember that Destiny is part of what makes a solo or duo campaign work. In group play, multiple characters can distribute pressure naturally. In one-on-one play, the protagonist often stands much closer to the whole burden of the scene. Destiny helps keep those scenes playable without making them soft.

The Feel of Destiny in CREEPS!

Destiny in **CREEPS!** should not feel like bright heroic radiance from a cleaner sort of fantasy.

It should feel like:

- the lantern not going out yet
- the door holding one breath longer
- the line of chalk staying unbroken
- the lie landing
- the witness listening
- the child hesitating
- the companion warning
- the route appearing
- the shield catching
- the memory returning
- the frame obeying
- the room not getting worse, just for a second, because the Creep refused to let it

It should feel personal. Earned. A little ridiculous. Sometimes very moving. Sometimes very funny in retrospect and absolutely not funny in the moment.

A Creep is small. Limbo is not.
Destiny is the rule that says small does not mean powerless.

Example Uses of Destiny in CREEPS!

Example 1: Holding the Passage

A Warden of the Passages is trying to keep a half-broken threshold closed while civilians retreat down a stairwell. The attack coming through the doorway is strong, the footing is bad, and the Clock tracking structural failure is nearly full. The player spends 2 Destiny for **+20** to the test.

The roll succeeds strongly. The door does not merely hold; the Warden buys enough time for the last family to clear the turn.

Example 2: The One Correct Lie

A Dastard is dealing with a black-market broker who knows far too much and trusts far too little. The Contest is Deception versus Insight. The player spends 1 Destiny to impose **−10** on the broker's roll.

The broker fails narrowly. The Dastard wins the scene—not by charm, but by hitting exactly the insecurity that makes the lie believable.

Example 3: Quiet the Realm

A Night Schooler is assisting with a failing Dream Passage in a child's room. The room is emotionally reactive, the seal pattern is incomplete, and panic is close to feeding the event. The player spends 1 Destiny for **+10** to Sorcery and another to impose **−10** on the opposing scene pressure in the Contest.

The roll becomes a success with a much better Degree of Success than it would otherwise have had. The room calms instead of widening. For now.

Example 4: Not Letting Go

A Binder-Kin slips while climbing above a black canal channel and loses grip with one hand. Their bonded companion is shrieking from the pipework above. The Creepmaster calls for a desperate test. The player spends their last Destiny point.

The test succeeds by a hair. The Creep holds on. The companion probably remains unbearable about it for the rest of the week.

Final Word

Destiny is not there to make Creeps invincible. It is there to make them protagonists.

That means they still suffer. They still fail. They still panic, misjudge, say the wrong thing, and occasionally find themselves face-down in the exact sort of district puddle that proves the universe has a sense of humor and should not. But when the stakes rise, they are allowed to matter with force.

That is what Destiny protects.

Not comfort.
Not certainty.
Not safety.

Importance.

When the seal shakes, when the crowd turns, when the child runs, when the witness breaks, when the dream reaches, when the threshold strains, when the room decides to become a problem, Destiny is the rule that lets the Creep answer:

Not yet.

CHAPTER 5: COMPANIONS

A Creep can survive alone. That does not mean it is wise.

The worlds brushed by **CREEPS!** are too strange, too sharp, and too eager to go wrong for any Protagonist to carry the whole burden of a story entirely by themselves. There are doors that should not be opened alone, roads that should not be walked alone, and silences that become much worse when no second set of ears is there to hear them breathing. That is where Companions come in.

A Companion is not a second Protagonist. A Companion does not seize the center of the story, does not replace the player's decisions, and does not exist to turn a One-on-One game into a crowded marching line of equal leads. The Protagonist remains the center of the camera at all times. The Companion tilts that camera. They alter the angle of danger, widen the emotional range of a scene, and give the player more ways to act upon the world than their own body alone could provide.

In practical play, a Companion is many things at once. They are extra hands, extra eyes, a witness, a responsibility, a source of comfort, a lever in danger, and a face the story can wound without immediately ending the session. They give the Protagonist someone to protect, someone to rely upon, someone to argue with, and someone whose fear or courage matters when the room goes bad. A Companion may be a fellow Creep, a bonded beast, a creature from somewhere stranger than Limbo, or an animal whose instincts are worth more than ten good plans. Whatever form they take, they should feel present in the fiction and useful in the moment.

Mechanically, Companions remain lighter than full characters. They do not need full Attribute arrays, long skill lists, or sprawling sub-systems. Instead, they are defined by what matters most: a clear role, a handful of Key Ratings, a few Signature Traits, and the same three universal actions shared by all proper Companions. They **Assist**, helping the Protagonist perform important Tests more effectively. They **Screen**, stepping in to blunt immediate danger, spoil bad angles, and keep pressure from crushing the Protagonist all at once. And they **Anchor**, buying time, steadying spiraling situations, and helping keep a scene from sliding cleanly into catastrophe.

A good Companion should never feel decorative. They should matter in play immediately. Their presence should suggest different choices, different risks, and different emotional stakes. A stealthy scavenger changes a ruin. A stubborn bruiser changes a retreat. A dream-touched witness changes a haunted threshold. A marsh-beast changes a night watch in the fog. The Protagonist is still the one who acts, chooses, and bears the weight of the story—but the Companion

makes that story richer, sharper, and far more difficult for the dark to swallow quietly.

What follows are sample Companion entries showing the range such allies can take in **CREEPS!**: a handful of fellow Creeps with very different temperaments and uses, one sly extradimensional nuisance not born of Limbo, and one true beast of that realm whose loyalty is measured in warning growls, wet tracks, and blood on the reeds.

Nab, the Lantern-Skulk

Physical Description:
Nab is a small, narrow-bodied Creep with oversized ears, soot-soft grey fur, long nervous fingers, and bright bead-like eyes that seem twice as alert in low light. His posture is permanently half-crouched, as though expecting either treasure or disaster from every dark corner, and he carries a hooded nail-lantern that throws a sickly green glow across his sharp little face.

Archetype: Scout-Scavenger

Personality & Quirks:
Nab is quick-eyed, whisper-voiced, and forever half-crouched as though expecting the ceiling to drop or the floor to bite. He is fussy about small treasures, deeply suspicious of locked boxes, and convinced that any room containing shelves must contain something worth stealing, reading, or knocking over by mistake. He hums when nervous, lies badly when embarrassed, and is fiercely loyal in the specific way of creatures who would absolutely deny it if asked directly.

Role in the Duo:
Nab is there to scout ahead, notice trouble early, help the Protagonist slip through bad places, and keep tense situations from turning catastrophic before the real work begins. He is especially useful in ruins, tunnels, alleys, cluttered interiors, and other spaces where a quick pair of hands and a quicker set of nerves matter more than muscle.

Key Ratings:
Stealth 58%
Awareness 55%
Acrobatics 51%
Sleight of Hand 49%
Scrounging 46%
Presence 38%

Signature Traits:

Lantern-Eyed in the Gloom
Nab sees detail in dim light with unsettling ease. In darkness, ruins, cramped interiors, and moon-starved corners, he is especially useful for spotting movement, hidden entries, loose boards, trip hazards, and the sort of environmental danger that prefers to be noticed too late. When Nab **Assists** an Awareness-based Test in darkness or low light, the Protagonist gains an additional **+10**.

Quick Little Body
Nab is built for slipping through danger rather than enduring it. He can squeeze through narrow gaps, climb cluttered surfaces, and scamper across precarious footing that would slow or stop larger companions. When Nib **Screens** against pursuit, interception, or flanking in tight or cluttered terrain, he is especially effective.

Scavenger's Fingers
Locks, pouches, rotten drawers, hidden cubbies, loose boards, dropped tools, and forgotten odds and ends all seem magnetized to Nab's attention. He is not a master thief, but he is an excellent finder of small useful things. When the Creepmaster judges that a scene contains overlooked supplies, concealed handholds, improvised tools, or petty salvage, Nab

may reveal one plausible find without requiring a full separate procedure.

Universal Companion Actions:
Assist — Nab grants **+10** when helping with tasks suited to his ratings or traits, especially stealth, scouting, searching, light movement, or quick-fingered meddling. In especially favorable situations, such as darkness, cramped interiors, or scavenging-heavy scenes, the Creepmaster may increase this to **+20** if Nab's help is central to the attempt.

Screen — Nab helps blunt immediate danger from pursuit, crowding, interception, or being surrounded, especially in broken terrain, narrow passages, debris-filled rooms, or layered vertical spaces.

Anchor — Nab steadies bad situations by keeping watch, hissing warnings, dragging over the right tool, pointing out an escape slit, stalling panic with quick chatter, or simply being one more pair of hands holding the scene together.

Personal Gear:
Hooded nail-lantern with a cracked green pane; twine bundle with hooks, bent pins, and three mismatched keys; rag-wrapped pry tool; pocketful of chalk bits, glass marbles, and scavenged screws; tiny stitched satchel full of "important salvage"; a charm made from a polished button and a dead moth's wing.

Bristle, the Door-Biter

Physical Description:
Bristle is a squat, broad-shouldered Creep built like a compact battering ram, with a thick neck, heavy brow, blunt horns, and a permanent scowl that makes him look offended by architecture. His hide is coarse and dark, his limbs are dense with knotted muscle, and his stance always suggests that if something needs blocking, breaking, or glaring at, he has already volunteered.

Archetype: Bulwark-Bruiser

Personality & Quirks:
Bristle is sullen, watchful, and deeply unimpressed by almost everyone except the Protagonist, toward whom he shows a stern and grumbling devotion. He dislikes heights, unnecessary conversation, and being touched without warning. He loves heavy doors, thick walls, practical tools, and any meal that can be described as "dense." When angry, he paws at the floor like a miniature wrecking ram preparing for theology.

Role in the Duo:
Bristle is there to hold space, blunt danger, keep enemies from swarming the Protagonist, and make ugly situations take longer to get worse. He is especially useful when the pair are cornered, outnumbered, crossing narrow ground, or trying to buy time under pressure.

Key Ratings:
Close Combat 61%
Endurance 58%
Might 56%
Awareness 42%
Intimidation 47%
Athletics 44%

Signature Traits:

Low Center, Mean Intent
Bristle is very difficult to shove, bowl over, or drive out of position. When he **Screens** against a charge, a rush, a flank, or an attempt to force the duo backward, he is especially effective. If the danger comes through a doorway, choke point, tunnel mouth, stair, or narrow bridge, the Creepmaster may treat Bristle's **Screen** as one step stronger than usual.

Horn-First Temperament
Bristle's natural answer to pressure is immediate and physical. Once per scene, when an enemy closes hard or tries to overwhelm the duo at close range, Bristle may violently disrupt the approach, buying the Protagonist a beat of space, a spoiled angle, or a momentary break in enemy momentum. This is not a full attack sequence of his own; it is a fictional and tactical interruption that helps keep the focus on the Protagonist's next move.

Refuses the Fall
Bristle does not give ground gracefully and rarely gives it quietly. When the Protagonist is at risk of being surrounded, dragged down, or forced into a worse position, Bristle can anchor the scene through sheer refusal. He is particularly strong when using **Anchor** in situations involving panic, pressure, collapsing formation, or a Clock that is rising because the duo is losing physical control of the space.

Universal Companion Actions:
Assist — Bristle grants **+10** when helping with tasks suited to force, bracing, hauling, battering, or physically imposing action. In especially favorable circumstances—holding a barricade, forcing a stuck entry, helping drag someone to safety, or standing shoulder-to-shoulder in a fight—this may rise to **+20**.

Screen — Bristle excels at blunting incoming danger, clogging bad approach angles, stopping the duo from being flanked, and giving the Protagonist room to breathe in hostile close quarters.

Anchor — Bristle anchors by planting himself, refusing to break, growling warnings, dragging furniture into place, shoving the Protagonist toward the better line, or simply becoming too inconvenient to ignore.

Personal Gear:
Iron-capped cudgel sized for a Creep with ugly opinions; leather harness with ring-hooks and drag loops; bent half-helm he refuses to wear properly; small pouch of nails, wedges, and door-spikes; thick scarf wrapped twice around the neck; a lucky tooth from something much larger than he is.

Morrow, the Dream-Thin

Physical Description:
Morrow is a pale, slight Creep with long delicate limbs, soft moon-washed features, and eyes that always seem focused on something just behind the visible world. Their hair hangs in wispy drifting strands, their movements are quiet and measured, and there is an almost unreal stillness to them, as though they arrived in the room a moment before the rest of their body did.

Archetype: Veil-Reader

Personality & Quirks:
Morrow is quiet, patient, and distractingly sincere. They speak as though every sentence has already passed through another room before reaching their mouth. They are kind in the way of someone who has seen too much fear to mock it. They dislike sudden shouting, distrust mirrors that seem too pleased with themselves, and have a habit of staring at empty corners until others begin doing the same. Morrow collects scraps of lullabies, dead moths, smooth pieces of bone, and names that should probably be left alone.

Role in the Duo:
Morrow helps the Protagonist read strange places, sense hidden danger, steady fraying scenes, and navigate dream-touched, occult, or emotionally unstable situations. They are especially useful where the threat is subtle, magical, psychological, or tied to the atmosphere of a place rather than immediate physical assault.

Key Ratings:
Awareness 59%
Lore 54%
Presence 52%
Sorcery 46%
Insight 50%
Stealth 38%

Signature Traits:

Hears the Wrong Quiet
Morrow notices when a room, corridor, ruin, threshold, or dream-space is quiet in the wrong way. When assisting with perception, occult reading, or emotional interpretation of a scene, Morrow grants **+10**, and in clearly dream-touched, haunted, sorcerous, or Astral-adjacent environments that bonus may rise to **+20** if their insight is central to the scene.

Soft Voice at the Edge
Morrow has a way of speaking that steadies panic, slows spiraling scenes, and keeps a bad moment from turning fully catastrophic. They are especially effective when using **Anchor** against fear, confusion, dream-pressure, magical unease, or rising Clocks driven by emotional collapse, hesitation, or uncanny influence.

Veil-Sense
Morrow can often tell when a thing is hidden by glamour, dream-logic, emotional residue, or a thin occult disguise. This does not automatically reveal every secret, but it allows the Creepmaster to offer a warning sign, strange impression, or partial read when something invisible, disguised, or spiritually present is close enough to matter.

Universal Companion Actions:
Assist — Morrow grants **+10** when helping with Awareness, Lore, social calming, occult interpretation, or delicate scene-reading. In dream-touched, haunted, sorcerous, or Astral-adjacent scenes, that help may become **+20** when Morrow's perception is central.

Screen — Morrow spoils danger by warning the Protagonist a breath early, pulling them away from a threshold, interrupting a bad choice, drawing attention to a hidden sign, or disrupting the emotional or supernatural momentum of an oncoming threat.

Anchor — This is Morrow's strongest action. They anchor scenes by speaking softly, identifying what is wrong, naming fear before it blooms, noticing the lie in a glamour, or keeping the Protagonist emotionally and spiritually oriented when a place or force is trying to disassemble that stability.

Personal Gear:
Bone-handled lantern with smoked glass shutters; folded scrap-book of signs, lullabies, and dream-notes; soft cord necklace strung with moth wings and tiny keys; wax-marked chalk for circles, warnings, and doorway signs; small knife used mostly for practical cutting and ritual neatness; a packet of dried herbs that smell faintly of rain and sleep.

Skirr, the Cinder-Nib

Physical Description:
Skirr is a lean little extradimensional creature with soot-dark scales, a narrow goblinish frame, lantern-yellow eyes, and a long expressive tail that flicks whenever he is thinking too hard or lying too easily. Small hooked horns curl back from his brow, his grin is full of fine sharp teeth, and he always smells faintly of ash, hot metal, and old locked places.

Archetype: Sneak-Saboteur

Personality & Quirks:
Skirr is sly, quick, vain, and offensively proud of skills that would be more impressive if they were not so

often used to make situations worse before making them better. He is meticulous about locks, traps, hidden catches, and negotiable rules. He dislikes churches, formal invitations, and any room that smells too much like clean linen. He hoards bright wire, polished teeth, bits of broken seal-wax, and tiny metal objects that "might become important," which is sometimes true often enough to be annoying. He lies for sport, but almost never lies to the Protagonist when it truly matters.

Role in the Duo:
Skirr is there to scout, tamper, spoil enemy preparations, notice hidden mechanisms, slip into ugly little places, and turn orderly problems into untidy ones. He is especially useful around locks, wards, narrow passages, trapped approaches, sabotage opportunities, and scenes where being underhanded is not merely acceptable but prudent.

Key Ratings:
Stealth 60%
Awareness 53%
Sleight of Hand 57%
Sabotage 55%
Lore 41%
Presence 44%

Signature Traits:

Elsewhere Eyes
Skirr has an instinctive feel for thresholds, hidden seams, bound spaces, and things that have been fastened together by magic or spite. When assisting with the detection of hidden latches, concealed entries, magical seals, unstable portals, or tampered mechanisms, Skirr grants **+10**. If the obstruction or concealment is especially artificial, warded, or cleverly trapped, that bonus may rise to **+20** when his meddling is central to the attempt.

Cinder Quick
Skirr moves with the darting confidence of something that has escaped being stepped on for most of its life. He is excellent at slipping through narrow paths, climbing around clutter, and crossing dangerous little spaces where hesitation is fatal. When he **Screens** in cramped terrain, trapped interiors, rafters, vents, crawlspaces, or dense mechanical clutter, he is especially effective.

Mean Little Ruiner
Given a moment and a suitable object, Skirr can make hinges fail, catches stick, lamps go dark, straps loosen, alarms misfire, and enemy plans become less neat than intended. Once per scene, when the duo would benefit from a small but plausible act of sabotage, the Creepmaster may allow Skirr to have already weakened, loosened, jammed, or spoiled one nearby thing that matters.

Universal Companion Actions:
Assist — Skirr grants **+10** when helping with stealth, scouting, tampering, trap-reading, hidden-mechanism work, sabotage, or other subtle interference. In especially favorable circumstances—complex locks, trapped entries, concealed seams, magical closures, or carefully ordered enemy preparations—this may rise to **+20**.

Screen — Skirr screens by spoiling lines of pursuit, slipping through bad angles first, springing distraction at the right second, throwing off enemy timing, or making a confined route more difficult for whoever is trying to close on the Protagonist.

Anchor — Skirr anchors by keeping a delicate problem from becoming a catastrophic one: jamming catches, wedging doors, bracing failing mechanisms, and buying seconds with spiteful improvisation.

Personal Gear:
Curved soot-black knife with three nicks in the spine;

coil of fine copper wire wrapped around one horn; roll of picks, hooks, and tiny bent tools in a charred leather fold; stub lantern with red glass shutter; pouch of ash, filings, nails, and "useful grit"; a tiny brass idol from his home dimension that he insists is not religious.

Mirefang, Limbo Marsh-Hound

Physical Description:
Mirefang is a rangy medium-sized beast with the low, watchful shape of a marsh hound crossed with something reptilian and half-drowned in moonlit swamp water. Its coat is slick and dark with streaks of mud-brown and reed-green, its feet are broad and webbed for soft ground, and its pale reflective eyes shine eerily through fog long before the rest of it becomes visible.

Archetype: Tracker-Beast

Personality & Quirks:
Mirefang is patient, low-voiced, and intensely attentive to scent, mud, and disturbed ground. It dislikes bright flame, deep bells, and surfaces that do not smell like weather. It circles camps before settling, sleeps lightly, and will stare into fog-banks for uncomfortably long stretches when something hidden is moving out there. Around the Protagonist it is steady, practical, and quietly possessive, with the calm confidence of an animal that knows it is very good at the one thing it was born to do.

Role in the Duo:
Mirefang is there to track, warn, pursue, guard the edges of camp, and keep the Protagonist from being surprised by movement in wet ground, reeds, murk, or low-visibility terrain. It is especially useful for a Tracker, scout, ranger, patrol-runner, or any Creep who expects to survive by reading paths other people thought they had hidden.

Key Ratings:
Tracking 62%
Awareness 56%
Endurance 52%
Stealth 43%
Athletics 47%
Bite 48%

Signature Traits:

Marsh-Nose
Mirefang can read scent through mud, rot-water, reeds, blood, rain, and the layered stink of bad country better than most thinking creatures can read a written confession. When assisting with pursuit, trail-reading, scenting hidden passage, or identifying what recently moved through an area, Mirefang grants **+10**. In wetlands, marsh-ground, mud, heavy fog, fresh rain, or Limbo's damp ruin-zones, that bonus may rise to **+20** when its nose is central to the scene.

Reed-Hush Gait
Though not invisible, Mirefang moves through wet growth and soft ground with far less noise than its size suggests. When **Screening** in marsh, reeds, mud, flooded paths, broken banks, or fog-heavy low terrain, it is especially effective, helping spoil ambushes and bad approach angles before they fully close.

Rumble Warning
Mirefang almost never barks first. It warns with a low throat-rumble that begins the moment something feels wrong. This makes it exceptionally valuable as an early warning presence. When using **Anchor** to steady a scene threatened by unseen approach, encroaching danger, rising panic in camp, or a Clock driven by uncertainty and bad visibility, Mirefang is especially strong.

Universal Companion Actions:
Assist — Mirefang grants **+10** when helping with tracking, pursuit, scent-work, path-reading, hidden-

presence detection, or movement through difficult natural terrain. In especially favorable conditions—wet ground, blood trails, marshland, rain-slick ruins, dense fog, or fresh spoor—this may rise to **+20**.

Screen — Mirefang screens by warning early, spoiling pursuit paths, threatening flanks, driving enemies out of reeds or cover, or forcing hidden things to reveal themselves sooner than intended.

Anchor — Mirefang anchors by staying alert, holding a camp perimeter, pacing a nervous edge, pressing close when panic rises, and refusing to let the unseen remain entirely unseen.

Personal Gear:
Thick leather tracking harness with ring-loops and stitched reed-charms; mud-dark collar set with tiny warning bones; travel blanket that smells faintly of wet moss; short lead and ground-stake; meal pouch of dried strips, marrow knots, and bitter marsh-root treats; scarred bite-guard for transport through crowded places.

CHAPTER 6: SORCERY & DREAMCRAFT

SORCERY OF LIMBO

In Limbo, sorcery is not the polished art that sensible old books pretend it ought to be. It is not a noble language of stars set neatly in circles of silver. It is not a stately bargain with heaven, nor a clean inheritance from benevolent powers who smile when petitioned properly. No god hands it down. No choir blesses it. No wise old mountain opens and teaches it in a voice like thunder and moral instruction. Sorcery in Limbo is stranger, meaner, and far more intimate than that. It is the art of reaching into the half-lit seams of reality and coming back with your hands full of dream-sparks, static grief, old longing, dimensional splinters, and just enough technique to stop the whole business from taking your eyebrows, your shadow, or your better judgment in the same afternoon.

It is an art, certainly, but not a polite one. It is a craft, but not a clean one. Sorcery is what happens when feeling leaves a stain, when dreams rub too hard against the skin of the world, when the Astral catches on Limbo like torn silk on a nail, when ancient rituals continue to echo long after the hands that first shaped them have become dust, bone, names in ledgers, or warnings whispered to apprentices who are already too curious to listen. Limbo is full of such remnants. The place remembers. It remembers fear, lullabies, broken vows, children's nightmares, desperate acts of care, old rites performed beneath cracked lanterns, and the many small violences required to keep a threshold closed once something has learned to knock from the wrong side. Sorcery gathers in those memories. It feeds in the pressure between worlds. It condenses in places where too much has been felt and not enough has been forgotten.

That is why sorcery in **CREEPS!** rarely feels abstract. It is not merely energy. It is atmosphere with teeth. It is emotion that has learned structure. It is dreamstuff made useful by creatures too clever, too sensitive, too stubborn, or too unlucky to leave it alone. A sorcerer in Limbo does not simply cast a spell. They agitate a place. They coax a dormant pattern to wake. They lay hands on energies that were already there—humming in the wall, caught in an old mirror, breathing softly in the folds between sleep and waking, trapped in the residue of grief, hope, terror, wonder, or the sort of concentrated childish imagination that leaves scorch marks on realities less durable than they claim to be. This is why so much of Limbo's magic feels close to the body and close to the scene. It is dramatic, but it is rarely grand in the imperial sense. Even strong sorcery tends to stay local. It bends a room, a corridor, a doorway, a stretch of road, a patch of shadows, a knot of enemies, a frightened witness, a dream-thin corner, or a radius no wider than twenty feet unless the story itself has gone badly enough to warrant uglier exceptions. Limbo allows spectacle, but it prefers intimacy. Its magic is vivid because it is near.

The earliest sorcerers did not set out to found a discipline. No sensible people ever do. They found accidents and then found uses for them. Long before the Vigil catalogued methods, issued permissions, frowned over licenses, and tried to bind the unrulier corners of the craft into shelves and rules and stamped authority, the first Creeps who practiced sorcery were simply those who noticed that dreams left residue. Human children, in particular, proved distressingly efficient at this. When they dreamed with sufficient intensity—of monsters under beds, of impossible kingdoms, of things with glowing eyes in wardrobes, of stairways that opened into moonlit oceans, of their toys whispering after midnight, of brave deeds, ruined picnics, secret doors, devouring fogs, distant mothers, wolves in waistcoats, and all the other unreasonable things that children produce so naturally—small motes of unreal energy would shake loose from those dreams and drift downward into the folds between worlds. These came to be known, by those early meddlers who had the wit to notice them, as Dream Sparks.

Dream Sparks were rarely dangerous at first contact. That was part of the trick. They seemed harmless. They hovered in the dark like curious dust, bright as moth-eyes and twice as foolish-looking. They popped in the air with little sounds like soft laughter or static kisses. They left trails through ruin-corridors, collected in old chimneys, drifted through nursery-thin breaches, clung to forgotten toys, and sometimes clustered in hollows where Limbo's air ran thick with stillness. When a Creep brushed one, odd little effects followed. A face might appear in a puddle that did not belong there. A burst of ghost-light might flare and vanish. A cold room might briefly warm like a held hand. A whisper might come from inside a locked cupboard. A discarded spoon might roll three inches on its own and then behave as though nothing had happened. To most sensible creatures, these incidents suggested caution. To the earliest sorcerers, they suggested possibility.

Curiosity is responsible for at least half the useful things in the world and nearly all the regrettable ones. A handful of early Creeps began to gather Dream Sparks deliberately, carrying them in stoppered glass, folded cloth, drilled beads, lantern bulbs, pocket shrines, and whatever else they could improvise before the motes either faded or turned the storage vessel mildly interesting. They learned that Limbo itself altered the Sparks. The atmosphere there—or whatever poor substitute for atmosphere Limbo truly possesses—did not merely hold dream residue. It worried it, flavored it, pressed on it with old emotional sediment and Astral interference until the Sparks behaved differently than they would have elsewhere. They could be guided. They could be amplified. They could be coaxed into repeating certain effects. A practiced hand could produce harmless illusions, wandering lights, soft waves of warmth, little shocks, murmurs, floating symbols, faint glamour, or sensory disturbances subtle enough to amuse and useful enough to matter. Those who learned these tricks first became the earliest Spark-Wrights, though the title was grander than their circumstances. Most were scavengers, hedge-workers, lamp-tenders, dream-sniffers, ruin-prodders, or half-feral little scholars with singed sleeves and inadequate supervision.

Even then, the foundations of Limbo sorcery were already present. It drew from dream passages. It fed on Astral echoes. It thickened where emotional residue pooled. It was sharpened by dimensional friction, the scraping contact between realities that were never meant to press so close for so long. And somewhere beneath all of it lay the influence of older practices, dimly remembered even then: ancient Vigil rites, threshold observances, ward-lantern ceremonies, sleep-watch invocations, and the severe little

geometries by which early guardians tried to keep dangerous crossings calm, sealed, or at least predictable. Those rituals left grooves in the world. Sorcery learned to run along them.

As with any useful danger, someone eventually tried to organize it.

That someone, according to the oldest accounts most scholars trust and the newer accounts most scholars resent, was Elamur the Scribbler. No discussion of Limbo's sorcery lasts long without his name crawling out of an archive drawer somewhere. Elamur was not, by most surviving descriptions, an inspiring physical specimen. He was tiny, ink-stained, half-blind, perpetually sleep-deprived, and reputedly impossible to interrupt once he began explaining a thing badly. He also possessed the two qualities required for all world-altering scholarship: a mind that could see patterns where others saw accidents, and a complete inability to leave those patterns alone once found. Where earlier Spark-Wrights relied on imitation, trial, superstition, and hard-earned practical habits, Elamur wanted system. He wanted names. He wanted notation. He wanted a way to distinguish an unreliable burst of dream-light from a repeatable light-working, a sentimental ward from a properly bound threshold sign, an accidental flare from a shaped expression of Power. Most of all, he wanted fewer apprentices to set themselves on metaphorical or literal fire while experimenting.

The result of that desire was the **Crystal Codex**, the foundational work of organized sorcery in Limbo and one of the few objects in the setting whose reputation is somehow both exaggerated and deserved. The Codex is said to be indestructible, though scholars tend to say that about any object they have failed to damage after multiple attempts. More important than its durability is its content. Within its impossible pages, Elamur gathered the first stable body of spell diagrams, runic structures, shaping principles, and safe procedural rules for handling arcane force without dissolving immediately into folklore, ash, or litigation. He gave spells names, which is no small gift in a craft where unnamed things tend to grow opinions of their own. He codified runic notation so sorcerers could communicate form instead of merely reenacting disaster until they arrived at the same result twice. He advanced Power-based shaping, clarifying the difference between a weak working and a stronger one not merely by spectacle but by structure, cost, and intent. And he insisted—bless his fussy, stubborn bones—that ritual safety mattered. Limbo has mocked safer minds than his for such confidence, but even mockery must admit that he improved the survival rate.

From Elamur's work came students. From those students came the First Circle of Enchanters, and from that Circle came the first serious notion that sorcery might be taught rather than merely survived. This did not make it respectable. Limbo has never made anything entirely respectable if it could help it. But it made sorcery legible. A Creepmaster may decide in a given tale that the Crystal Codex still exists in some sealed archive, or has been fragmented into copied traditions, or persists as a dream-object accessible only through perilous sleep and more perilous librarianship. Rumor, inevitably, insists that Elamur himself never entirely went away. Some say he died in his stacks and rose as a dream-echo. Some say he wrote so much of himself into the Codex that he cannot properly leave it. Some say he still haunts the deeper archives, muttering corrections at sleeping apprentices and smacking the hands of anyone who reaches for the wrong folio. In Limbo, all of these may be true enough to matter.

By the time the Vigil came to formal prominence as keeper, regulator, and suspicious steward of

dangerous knowledge, sorcery had already proven itself too useful to ban outright and too hazardous to leave entirely to whoever found a glowing fungus patch and a regrettable amount of confidence. The Vigil did what institutions always do when faced with a thing both necessary and unruly: it embraced, restricted, licensed, categorized, supervised, and quietly feared it. This is not entirely hypocrisy. Limbo gives poor rewards to organizations that fail to fear the right things. Modern sorcery in the setting is therefore neither wholly secret nor truly free. Many Creeps know a trick or two. Minor workings circulate widely enough: useful lights, simple glamours, little wards, tiny signaling effects, protective signs, sleep-soothing whispers, petty concealments, brief sensory prods, minor bindings, and other modest manipulations that make life in a bad realm fractionally more survivable. But stronger sorcery is another matter.

The potent workings—those that can shape a battlefield corner, seal a threshold under duress, distort a dream passage, punish an enemy through folded light, defend a patrol against shadow-things, or pull hard on the fabric between worlds—require more than nerve. They require instruction, discipline, and often permission from those who think permission ought to matter. In most established corners of Limbo, serious study passes through the hands of the Vigil in one form or another. That means licenses, supervised apprenticeship, recorded practice, formal evaluation, or rare story-born exceptions in which a Protagonist acquires sorcery under circumstances no committee would approve but no committee is currently alive enough to prevent. The Vigil justifies this control in language of public safety, and to be fair, public safety in Limbo is often a worthwhile ambition. There are good reasons not to let every gutter-minded scavenger with an Essence reserve and an interesting childhood start tearing at reality because they found a diagram in a wet book. Portals widen. Wards fail. Dreams spill. Emotional residue blooms into living problems. The dead become more conversational than policy prefers. These things happen.

And yet the important truth remains: every Creep has the potential for magic.

This does not mean every Creep becomes a sorcerer, any more than every hand holding a knife becomes a surgeon. Sensitivity varies. Discipline varies. Courage, or the lack of the healthy kind of fear, varies enormously. Still, the potential exists. Limbo is close enough to everyone there that sorcery is never purely external. It is not a noble inheritance restricted to shining bloodlines. It is not a gift distributed only to the chosen. It is a possibility waiting in the pressure points of the self. Some Creeps discover it through study. Some through necessity. Some through the sort of stress that cracks the world inside the ribs just enough for strange light to leak in. Trauma has woken sorcery in many otherwise ordinary creatures. So has grief. So has proximity to portal-collapse, prolonged exposure to threshold instability, dream saturation, haunting, severe fright, or the sustained presence of places where reality has become too thin to continue pretending at decency. In such moments, a latent gift may surface without warning. A lamp may answer a frightened hand. A shadow may wrinkle away from a word never consciously learned. A rune may blaze beneath the skin. A sleeping room may begin to whisper back.

For all that, sorcery remains learnable. That is the difference between a gift and a craft. A spontaneous flare of power is not the same as competence. It may begin a sorcerer, but it does not complete one. To practice the art in any reliable way requires technique, patience, repetition, and the willingness to fail in smaller, educational ways rather than larger, memorable ones. A sorcerer in Limbo learns not only how to call power, but how to endure it, shape it,

contain it, dismiss it, and pay for it without accidentally paying twice. They learn the moods of places. They learn when not to cast. They learn that emotional residue is not metaphor. They learn that dream-born force will answer desire too eagerly if not directed sharply. They learn that folded reality is useful right up until it remembers it can fold back. They learn that old Vigil ritual sites may amplify a working or devour it depending on details no amateur ever bothers to write down. They learn, above all, that cleverness is not protection. It is merely a better class of risk.

No account of Limbo sorcery would be complete without naming those figures whose lives—and in some cases afterlives—still lean over the discipline. Elamur the Scribbler looms over the chapter like a smudged saint of index cards and arcane caution, founder of what most modern sorcerers would recognize as the formal art. Whether he remains active as a dream-echo in the archives or merely active as an argument in every serious school, his influence persists. There is also Mistress Grivetta of the Third Spire, a Master Enchanter whose reputation arrives before she does, usually in a storm of muttered corrections and floating spectacles. She is said to maintain more than thirty pairs, each hovering around her in a glittering orbit of lenses, runes, and aggressively educational disapproval. Grivetta is best known for Runes and Glyphs, and for a temperament often described as lightning-tempered by those who have survived instruction under her and still feel generous. She has produced excellent sorcerers, terrified adequate ones into improvement, and reduced several incompetent dabblers to silence so profound it may count as a pedagogical technique.

Then there is Old Crik-Crik, proof that Limbo has room for genius and catastrophe in the same body. He wanders. He mutters. He carries pockets full of unsorted components, half-charms, pocket bones, mushrooms that any decent alchemist would throw away, and diagrams drawn on things that ought never to have held ink. His spells are unstable often enough that no one should trust him completely, yet brilliant often enough that no one sensible dismisses him either. He is friendly in the dangerous way of those who seem delighted by company, wrong about facts, right about outcomes, and one breath away from either solving a problem magnificently or turning a doorstep blue for three weeks. In many campaigns, Old Crik-Crik makes the perfect liminal figure between formal sorcery and gutter-practice: half warning, half treasure map, wholly ungovernable.

More disciplined, and therefore in some ways more alarming, is Thornwick of the Lantern Order, a Vigil Commander whose use of sorcery in tactical operations reminds everyone that magic is not only for archives, rituals, and academic vanity. Thornwick specializes in light, signals, anti-shadow workings, and the practical battlefield uses of controlled arcane output. Where other sorcerers speak of the art with reverence, Thornwick is reputed to speak of timing, line of sight, patrol survival, perimeter control, and how many of his subordinates can be kept alive if a proper flare-sign is placed before the ambush closes. He represents the Vigil at its most defensible: competent, severe, wary, and very good at turning strange light into something like order.

These figures together reveal what sorcery means in **CREEPS!**. It is not one thing. It is scholarship and improvisation, discipline and accident, ritual and panic, lantern-work and dream-filth, codified diagrams and old nonsense that still works because the world is too tired to argue. It lives in towers and ruined chapels, patrol routes and flooded cellars, official ledgers and children's bad sleep. It can be taught by a master with thirty spectacles or stumbled into by a frightened

little creature standing too close to a portal when the hinges of reality slip. It is controlled, and it leaks. It is regulated, and it mutates. It is feared for good reasons and pursued for equally good ones.

To practice sorcery in Limbo, then, is to enter a relationship with nearness. The nearness of dream to waking. The nearness of feeling to force. The nearness of threshold to collapse. The nearness of clever intention to unforgettable error. A proper sorcerer does not merely know spells. They know places, moods, residues, timings, materials, costs, and the different sounds a room makes before and after a working disturbs it. They learn to recognize the static taste of dimensional friction on the tongue. They learn that old grief in masonry is more than poetic language. They learn which lantern flames bow toward a hidden crossing and which glass will ring if a folded space is nearby. They learn what not to touch. They fail to obey that lesson often enough to progress.

This chapter concerns that art in all its local, luminous, troublesome glory: the strange lights, the dream-born force, the folded reality, the practiced shaping of power in a realm that never entirely agreed to remain in one piece. Sorcery in **CREEPS!** should feel dramatic, flavorful, risky, and immediate. It should never become so vast that it drowns the intimate horror and crooked wonder of the setting. A spell should alter the scene, not replace it. A sorcerer should feel dangerous, but never beyond consequence. Magic should open possibilities, expose fragilities, solve one problem while threatening two more, and remind everyone at the table that Limbo is made not only of places and creatures, but of pressures—emotional, dimensional, dream-born, and ancient—that can be persuaded, shaped, and, on very bad nights, persuaded to shape back.

That is sorcery here: not the clean mastery of a distant universe, but the learned handling of a nearby wound in the world. It glows. It whispers. It answers. And when treated carelessly, it remembers your name.

Sorcery Rules

Sorcery is cast with the **Sorcery** skill. When a spell is attempted, the caster makes a **Sorcery** test, applying any situational modifiers the Creepmaster finds appropriate. A clean ritual space, proper instruction, strong symbolism, sympathetic materials, favorable environmental conditions, and adequate time may all justify Advantage or a favorable modifier. Distraction, exhaustion, injury, hostile terrain, unstable magical interference, poor materials, haste, or emotional shock may impose Disadvantage or a harsher penalty.

Every spell costs **Essence**. The cost is listed in the spell entry. Unless the Creepmaster rules that the casting failed before the working truly began, the Essence is spent whether the spell succeeds or fails. Once the force has been drawn into motion, the body and spirit have already paid for the attempt.

Some spells affect unwilling targets. In those cases, the caster still rolls **Sorcery**, and the target resists with the most appropriate Attribute or skill, depending on the nature of the spell. Physical effects are often resisted with **Grace**, **Might**, **Endurance**, or a practical skill such as **Athletics**. Mental, emotional, dreamlike, or fear-based effects are often resisted with **Presence**, **Awareness**, or another suitable test. If both sides are actively contesting one another, use normal **One-on-One RPG** contest rules.

When a spell's duration is listed as **1 round per DoS**, use the caster's **Degree of Success** as the basis for how long the working holds. If a spell has a fixed duration instead, use that duration as written.

Some workings require **Components**. These may include glowing fungus, ground crystals, smoke motes,

feathers, dripping dreamstuff, small charms, chalk sigils, or simple focus items. If a spell requires Components, the entry notes them. Casting without the proper components imposes **Disadvantage**, or may make the spell impossible altogether if the component is central to the working and the Creepmaster judges that no substitute could credibly function.

Basic Spells represent the common body of trainable sorcery known across Limbo's schools, ruined archives, lantern orders, hedge circles, and whispered traditions. Advanced Spells are different. They are not part of ordinary starting study. They are earned through Dream Passage exposure, Dreamcraft analysis, Vigil trials, Codex fragments, occult teachers, magical accidents, spirit dealings, or other story-driven means. A Creep begins play with Basic Spells only unless the Creepmaster explicitly says otherwise.

Learning Sorcery

A Creep learns sorcery the same way most dangerous useful things are learned in Limbo: through study, exposure, mentorship, theft, survival, or some regrettable combination of all five. To practice the art, a character must possess the **Sorcery** skill and must have access to an actual source of learning—whether that means a teacher, a text, a surviving diagram, a Dream Passage, a Vigil-run instruction hall, a runesmith's notes, a fragment of Elamur's work, or an old place where the world has thinned enough to teach bad lessons quickly.

A character with Sorcery begins play with **1 Basic Spell**, plus additional Basic Spells according to their Sorcery skill:

- **Sorcery 1–20**: +1 Basic Spell
- **Sorcery 21–40**: +2 Basic Spells
- **Sorcery 41–60**: +3 Basic Spells
- **Sorcery 61–80**: +4 Basic Spells

This means a starting sorcerer knows the following number of Basic Spells in total:

- **Sorcery 1–20**: 2 Basic Spells
- **Sorcery 21–40**: 3 Basic Spells
- **Sorcery 41–60**: 4 Basic Spells
- **Sorcery 61–80**: 5 Basic Spells

Advanced Spells are never starting selections under ordinary circumstances. They are story rewards, secrets, discoveries, initiations, and hard-won pieces of deeper knowledge.

Spell Entry Format

Each spell uses the following structure:

Spell Name
Range/Area: How far the spell reaches or how much space it affects.
Duration: How long the effect lasts.
Essence: The Essence cost to cast the spell.
Components: Any materials, charms, marks, or focuses required. If no special materials are needed, the entry lists **None**.
Requirement: Used primarily for Advanced Spells or unusual workings that demand a special condition to learn. Basic Spells do not usually require this line unless the Creepmaster wants to note a specific training source.
Description: A prose explanation of what the spell does in play, including its mechanical effect.

The Library of Basic Spells

Light & Illusion

Sparklight
Range/Area: Self or within 10 feet
Duration: 10 minutes
Essence: 1
Components: None
Description: A tiny floating mote of light appears and follows the caster or hangs where placed. It sheds enough light to guide movement, read close text, or mark a path.

Gleamflash
Range/Area: 10 feet
Duration: Instant; impairment lasts 1d4 rounds
Essence: 2
Components: Ground crystal or polished glass shard
Description: The caster releases a sharp burst of light. One target or a tight cluster of weak foes must succeed on an appropriate resist test, usually **Awareness** or **Grace**, or suffer **Disadvantage on sight-based actions** for **1d4 rounds**.

Shadow Candle
Range/Area: One touched point or object
Duration: 10 minutes
Essence: 1
Components: A wick, soot mark, or dark focus
Description: The caster conjures a black flame that illuminates shadowed details rather than bright surfaces. While it burns, gain **+10 on Awareness tests** involving hidden corners, concealed recesses, or shadowed movement.

Mirror-Skitter
Range/Area: Up to 20 feet
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 1
Components: Small charm or reflective shard
Description: The caster creates the illusion of tiny scampering creatures. The effect grants **+10** to a related distraction, trickery, escape, or misdirection attempt, or imposes **Disadvantage** on one immediate enemy notice test if the illusion is plausible.

Veil of Gloom
Range/Area: 10-foot radius or one small room
Duration: 1 battle or 10 minutes outside combat
Essence: 3
Components: Smoke motes or soot
Description: A murky veil fills the area. Creatures looking or attacking through it usually suffer **Disadvantage** on sight-based actions, while creatures hiding within it gain **+10 Stealth** when appropriate.

Hall of Echoes
Range/Area: One room or 20-foot area
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 2
Components: Chalk sigil or repeated phrase
Description: The caster bends sound into false repetition, doubled whispers, and misleading echoes. Creatures in the area must succeed on an **Awareness**-based resist test or suffer **Disadvantage** on hearing-based notice tests.

Force & Utility

Push-Knock
Range/Area: 5 feet
Duration: Instant
Essence: 1
Components: None
Description: A brief telekinetic shove nudges a small object, bumps a latch, or produces an audible knock. It cannot batter through real resistance but can move something light in a useful way.

Gripstring
Range/Area: 20 feet
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 1

Components: Thread, hair, or fine cord
Description: The caster manifests a faint telekinetic string that can lift, tug, or draw an unattended object weighing up to about 5 pounds.

Arcane Tether
Range/Area: Touch
Duration: 10 minutes
Essence: 1
Components: String, loop, or knot charm
Description: The caster binds one or two small objects lightly to the hands or body. Gain **+10** on tests to retain or quickly recover those items in chaos or struggle.

Mage Hand
Range/Area: 20 feet
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 2
Components: Simple focus item
Description: A small invisible force-hand can lift, carry, open, pour, or manipulate tiny unattended objects at a distance. It cannot make attacks or restrain living targets.

Gravity Nudge
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: Instant
Essence: 2
Components: Weighted charm or ground crystal
Description: The caster gives a brief magical push or pull. A target that fails an appropriate resist test is moved up to **5 feet**.

Stone Skin Patch
Range/Area: Touch
Duration: 1 battle
Essence: 2
Components: Dust, grit, or stone flake
Description: The caster hardens a patch of the target's body into rough mineral armor. The target gains **AR 1**.

Featherdrop
Range/Area: Up to 4 Creeps within touch or close reach
Duration: Until landing
Essence: 3
Components: Feather or soft down
Description: The caster slows a fall into a safe or nearly safe descent for up to **100 feet**.

Echo Tap
Range/Area: Touch
Duration: Instant
Essence: 1
Components: Knuckle, rod, or tapping focus
Description: A subtle magical pulse passes into a touched surface. Gain **+10** on tests to detect hollows, thin barriers, false backs, hidden cavities, or simple traps.

Elemental

Cinder Flicker
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: Instant
Essence: 2
Components: Spark source, cinder, or ash
Description: The caster flicks a hot ember-bolt. On a successful Sorcery attack, it deals **1d4 fire damage**.

Frost Nibble
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: Instant
Essence: 2
Components: Cold water, frost scrap, or chilled token
Description: The caster sends a biting curl of cold into a target. On a successful Sorcery attack, it deals **1d4 cold damage**.

Shock Pop
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: Instant; disruption brief
Essence: 2

Components: Metal sliver, spark mote, or crystal
Description: A crackle of lightning strikes the target. On a successful Sorcery attack, it deals **1d4 lightning damage**. If the target fails an **Endurance** resist test, it also suffers **Disadvantage on its next action**.

Gust Pouch
Range/Area: 5-foot burst
Duration: Instant
Essence: 1
Components: Breath, feather, or hollow reed
Description: A sharp burst of wind scatters dust, snuffs weak flames, disturbs smoke, or imposes **Disadvantage** on one immediate ranged or delicate action in the burst zone.

Dust Swirl
Range/Area: One target or small close cluster
Duration: 1 battle
Essence: 2
Components: Dust, ash, or ground crystal
Description: A gritty magical swirl harasses eyes and aim. Affected targets suffer **-10 to attacks** for the duration.

Vine-Grasp
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 3
Components: Vine, root fiber, or green cutting
Description: Thin magical vines lash up and bind a target. The target must succeed on a **Grace**, **Might**, or **Athletics** test or become **restrained**.

Dripstone Shot
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: Instant
Essence: 2
Components: Stone chip, grit, or cave fragment
Description: The caster hurls a sharpened stone shard. On a successful Sorcery attack, it deals **1d4 damage**.

Steam Puff
Range/Area: Close range, small cone or burst
Duration: Instant
Essence: 2
Components: Water drop and heat source
Description: A hot burst of steam disorients nearby foes. Targets in the burst must resist with **Awareness** or **Endurance** or suffer **Disadvantage** on their next action.

Ash Veil
Range/Area: Self or close cluster
Duration: 1 battle
Essence: 2
Components: Ash, soot, or smoke mote
Description: A drifting veil of smoke-like ash settles around the target. Affected creatures gain **+10 Stealth** while the veil remains plausible and undisturbed.

Radiant Drip
Range/Area: Touch or 10 feet
Duration: Instant
Essence: 1
Components: Clear water, pale crystal, or polished charm
Description: A drop of concentrated pale force falls or flicks onto the target, dealing **1d4 radiant damage**.

Defense & Protection

Ward Bubble
Range/Area: Self or touch
Duration: Until the next hit or end of scene
Essence: 2
Components: Chalk sigil or small charm
Description: A thin shimmering ward forms around the target and reduces the **next damage taken by 1d4**.

Hardening Touch
Range/Area: Touch

Duration: 1 battle
Essence: 2
Components: Stone dust, shell flake, or iron grit
Description: The target's body or gear hardens briefly. The target gains **AR 1**.

Blink-Skip
Range/Area: Self
Duration: Instant
Essence: 2
Components: None
Description: The caster slips sideways through a tiny folded seam and reappears up to **5 feet** away in a space they can see and fit into.

Mage Guard
Range/Area: Self
Duration: One attack
Essence: 2
Components: Simple focus item
Description: A sharp parrying field snaps into place. Gain **+20 Defense** against **one incoming attack**.

Flicker Dodge
Range/Area: Self
Duration: Next dodge or evasive movement
Essence: 1
Components: None
Description: The caster's outline jitters. Gain **Advantage** on the next dodge, evasion, or immediate repositioning test.

Barrier Stitch
Range/Area: 10-foot line or narrow shield-space
Duration: 1 round
Essence: 3
Components: Chalk sigil, thread, or traced line
Description: A temporary arcane barrier appears, providing cover and imposing **Disadvantage** on attacks or movement passing through it for 1 round.

Astral Quiet
Range/Area: 10-foot radius
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 3
Components: Smoke mote or silencing charm
Description: The area turns spiritually muffled. Spellcasting inside it suffers **Disadvantage**, and fragile magical effects may collapse entirely.

Unravel Hex
Range/Area: Touch or 10 feet
Duration: Instant
Essence: 3
Components: Small charm, chalk sigil, or focus item
Description: The caster loosens a simple magical effect, weak curse, petty glamour, or minor ward. Resolve as an opposed Sorcery test; on success, the effect ends.

Healing & Restoration

Stitchlight
Range/Area: Touch
Duration: Instant
Essence: 4
Components: Glowing fungus or warm charm
Description: Pale restorative light binds hurt flesh. The target recovers damage **no greater than Light Wound** condition.

Soothe Spore
Range/Area: Touch or close breath-range
Duration: Instant or one short scene
Essence: 2
Components: Spores, herb dust, or soft fungus
Description: The caster calms and purges a minor fungal irritation or spore sickness. It grants **+10** on tests to resist or recover from such effects and may end a minor one outright.

Calm Dream
Range/Area: Touch or sleeping subject within 10 feet

Duration: One sleep cycle or one immediate dream episode
Essence: 2
Components: Feather, charm, or drop of dreamstuff
Description: The caster smooths a nightmare, dream-spasm, or minor sleep disturbance, negating a minor nightmare effect or granting **+10** to resist dream intrusion.

Control, Trickery & Debuffs

Jitters Hex
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: 1 battle or 1 round per DoS
Essence: 2
Components: Twisted thread, shaking charm, or bone chip
Description: The target's hands and precision go visibly unsteady. On a failed resist test, it suffers **–10 to relevant tests**, especially aimed attacks, spellcasting, or fine manipulation.

Sleepytime Whisp
Range/Area: Close range, one tiny or very small creature
Duration: Short sleep
Essence: 2
Components: Feather or drifting mote
Description: A sleepy magical thread settles over a small-bodied creature. On a failed resist test, it falls asleep briefly or becomes too drowsy to act properly.

Tripline
Range/Area: 10-foot crossing or threshold
Duration: 1 battle or 1 hour if left passive
Essence: 2
Components: Chalk sigil, string, or traced line
Description: The caster places a low invisible snag of force across a path. The first creature to cross must succeed on a **Grace** or **Athletics** test or stumble, stop short, or fall prone.

Eerie Glance
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target able to see the caster
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 2
Components: None
Description: The caster lays a wrongness into their stare. On a failed **Presence** or comparable resist test, the target becomes **Frightened**.

Confound Bubble
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: 1 action or 1 round
Essence: 2
Components: Bubble, breath, or tiny charm
Description: A wobbling pocket of confusion surrounds the target. On a failed resist test, its next movement or action becomes random, misdirected, or uselessly off-balance.

Advanced Spells

Powerful Light & Darkness

Moonwell Beam
Range/Area: 20-foot beam
Duration: Instant
Essence: 5
Components: Pale crystal, mirror shard, or moon-touched focus
Requirement: Vigil instruction, Codex fragment, or moonlit ritual site
Description: A concentrated beam of pale radiance strikes the target line, dealing **1d10 radiant damage**.

Umbra Cage
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: 10 rounds in combat; up to 1 hour outside combat
Essence: 5
Components: Shadow focus, soot, or black thread

Requirement: Deep shadow rites, forbidden tutoring, or old archive formulae
Description: Shadows close around the target and bind it. On a failed resist test, the target is trapped until the duration ends or it breaks free with a successful test.

Astral Break
Range/Area: 20 feet or one magical effect in sight
Duration: Instant
Essence: 6
Components: Codex notation, crystal focus, or chalk sigil
Requirement: Elamur-derived teaching or Codex study
Description: The caster forcefully shatters a strong magical effect, ward, or active working. Resolve as an opposed Sorcery test; on success, the target magic breaks.

Lantern Line
Range/Area: 30-foot line
Duration: 1 round per DoS
Essence: 4
Components: Lantern glass, polished crystal, or beam focus
Requirement: Vigil lantern-order instruction or equivalent tradition
Description: A hard line of revealing light exposes invisible, glamoured, or lightly hidden beings in its path.

Movement & Space

Short Rift Step
Range/Area: Self
Duration: Instant
Essence: 5
Components: Dream residue, crystal shard, or threshold token
Requirement: Dream Passage exposure, portal study, or spatial formulae
Description: The caster steps through a short seam in space and teleports up to **100 feet** to a visible or clearly known location.

Echo Fold
Range/Area: Self
Duration: 1d6 rounds
Essence: 4
Components: Mirror shard or reflective charm
Requirement: Illusionist teaching, dreamwork, or copied Codex pages
Description: The caster creates an illusory double. Enemies attacking the caster usually suffer **Disadvantage** on the first attack unless they can see through the deception.

Dimensional Dip
Range/Area: Self
Duration: Instant or a few seconds
Essence: 5
Components: Dripping dreamstuff or threshold-mark
Requirement: Portal contact, dream exposure, or rare spatial instruction
Description: The caster slips partly out of phase and passes through a thin solid barrier or opening that would otherwise block movement.

Phantom Path
Range/Area: Self or touch
Duration: 1d6 rounds
Essence: 4
Components: Chalk sigil or air-drawn line
Requirement: Spatial trial, dream-crossing, or equivalent learning
Description: The caster walks on air as though it were uncertain but real footing, allowing movement across open gaps.

Portal Nudge
Range/Area: One nearby active portal or thin place
Duration: Instant
Essence: 5

Components: Riftblossom, crystal focus, or codified portal sign
Requirement: Portal study, Codex fragment, Vigil trial, or threshold practice
Description: The caster subtly shifts the position or edge of a nearby portal by a short distance. What this can achieve is always subject to tight Creepmaster control.

Elemental Advanced

Fire Lurch
Range/Area: 10-foot line
Duration: Instant
Essence: 4
Components: Flame source, cinder pollen, or heat focus
Requirement: Advanced elemental study or destructive mishap
Description: A line of fire tears outward, dealing **1d10 fire damage** to creatures in its path.

Frost Rack
Range/Area: 10-foot patch or narrow zone
Duration: 1d6 rounds
Essence: 4
Components: Ice token, cold water, or frost focus
Requirement: Cold shrines, winter rites, or deep cellar instruction
Description: The ground flash-freezes into a slick killing surface. Crossing creatures must succeed on a **Grace** or **Athletics** test or fall prone.

Storm Lash
Range/Area: Two targets within 20 feet of one another
Duration: Instant
Essence: 5
Components: Metal focus, ground crystal, or lightning token
Requirement: Strong supervision, survival of an electrical event, or guarded teaching
Description: Lightning chains between two targets. Each struck target suffers **1d8 lightning damage**.

Stone Crown
Range/Area: Touch
Duration: 1d6 rounds
Essence: 4
Components: Stone dust, crown-mark, or shell fragment
Requirement: Earth-working instruction or old ruin study
Description: The target is sheathed in heavier mineral force and gains **AR 2**.

Bloom Burst
Range/Area: 10-foot radius
Duration: Restraint lasts 1 round per DoS
Essence: 5
Components: Seeds, vine matter, or living root
Requirement: Green rites, growth-sites, or plant-bound initiation
Description: Violent plant growth erupts outward. Creatures in the area must succeed on a **Grace**, **Might**, or **Athletics** test or become **restrained**.

Gas Bloom
Range/Area: 10-foot cloud
Duration: 1d6 rounds or until dispersed
Essence: 4
Components: Fungus, spores, or gas-vial catalyst
Requirement: Alchemical crossover teaching or experimental study
Description: A cloud of disorienting gas blossoms into the area. Creatures inside must resist with **Endurance** or **Awareness** or act confused, suffering **Disadvantage** on actions.

Control & Debuffs

Fear Wail
Range/Area: 10-foot radius or one room
Duration: 1 round per DoS

Essence: 4
Components: Bone whistle, hollow charm, or voice focus
Requirement: Spirit contact, nightmare exposure, or harsh trial
Description: A wave of dread rolls through the area. Creatures within must resist with **Presence** or another composure test or become **Frightened**.

Mind Knot
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: 1d4 rounds
Essence: 5
Components: Thread knot, sigil, or crystal loop
Requirement: Codex fragment, advanced tutor, or anti-sorcery instruction
Description: The target's capacity for structured spellcasting is tangled shut. On a failed resist test, the target cannot cast spells for the duration.

Paralight Touch
Range/Area: Touch
Duration: 1d4 rounds
Essence: 5
Components: Pale crystal, charged charm, or numbing focus
Requirement: Advanced bodily-control instruction or perilous experiment
Description: A rigid thread of magical force locks the target's body. On a failed **Endurance** resist test, a small creature is **paralyzed** for the duration.

Dread Echo
Range/Area: 20 feet, one target
Duration: Instant; target loses next action
Essence: 4
Components: Whispered phrase, echo charm, or voice focus
Requirement: Fear-working study or old echo chambers
Description: The target is struck by a sudden doubling of dread and hesitation. On a failed resist test, it **loses its next action**.

Borrowed Shadow
Range/Area: Self
Duration: 1d6 rounds
Essence: 4
Components: Shadow focus, soot, or black cloth charm
Requirement: Shadow rite, hidden teacher, deep ruin practice, or dream-thin initiation
Description: The caster borrows concealment from the surrounding dark and becomes semi-invisible, gaining **+20 Stealth** for the duration. Creatures trying to attack or track the caster in shadow usually suffer **Disadvantage**.

DREAMCRAFT

If Sorcery is the art of shaping strange force in the waking world, **Dreamcraft** is the far less polite practice of working on the border where sleep, memory, the Astral, and symbolic reality begin leaning on one another hard enough to leave fingerprints. The two arts are related, but they are not the same, and any Creep foolish enough to treat them as interchangeable will eventually discover the distinction in a deeply personal way.

Sorcery, even at its strangest, usually concerns itself with the world as it is presently arranged. It bends light, heat, motion, warding, fear, concealment, force, and other immediate pressures. It acts on rooms, bodies, passages, doors, shadows, and the concrete hazards of a scene. Dreamcraft does something subtler and in many ways more dangerous. It works on thresholds of mind and meaning. It reaches into the softened logic of dreams, the half-formed roads between sleeping selves, the residue left behind by Dream Passages, and the symbolic weather that clings to Astral travel. A sorcerer can light a corridor. A

dreamcrafter can tell whether the corridor has begun dreaming about being a river. A sorcerer can seal a door. A dreamcrafter can feel that the door no longer leads where it thinks it does.

In practical play, Dreamcraft is not a replacement for Sorcery. It is a neighboring discipline, often learned by those who spend too much time around Dream Passages, sleep-thin sites, portal wakes, drifting Astral residue, haunted thresholds, and the kind of deep sleep that becomes a location rather than a condition. Some Creeps come to it deliberately through occult study. Others back into it after surviving repeated dream exposure. A few simply wake one morning knowing that the room is not entirely awake with them and never recover the luxury of ignorance.

Dreamcraft should feel rarer, stranger, and more situational than ordinary Sorcery, but no less important for that. It becomes especially valuable in stories involving portal use, dream contamination, sleep-haunting, symbolic geography, Astral crossing, memory echoes, lost paths, and the dangerous softness of places that have forgotten whether they are real, remembered, or merely visited. Where Sorcery gives the Protagonist tools for surviving force, Dreamcraft gives them tools for surviving drift. It helps them interpret dream logic, navigate unstable crossings, sense whether a threshold is safe, preserve identity during Astral travel, detect false routes, mark symbolic return paths, and intervene when sleep has become an active participant in the scene.

Dreamcraft does not usually rely on the same broad range of material components that Sorcery does. It has one central requirement instead: **Dream Passage Residue**.

Dream Passage Residue

When a true Dream Passage opens, closes, sheds force, or is crossed by living will, a strange trace matter, Dream Passage Residue, is produced in its wake. It is not ordinary dust, vapor, mist, or fluid, though it may resemble any of those things depending on how and where it is found. In some places it appears as silver condensation beaded on stone that should be dry. In others it gathers like soft luminous powder in cracks around a threshold. It may hang in the air as drifting motes that only become visible when lantern-light catches them sideways. It may collect in fabric, hair, feathers, or the mouths of glass bottles as though remembering the shape of a road no longer present. Some residue is cold. Some is warm. Some smells faintly of rain-soaked blankets, old lullabies, burnt sugar, damp paper, childhood fear, or the inside of a room you have not entered yet.

None of these descriptions are especially helpful, but all of them are true.

Residue is acquired from places where Dream Passages have recently opened, where dream-thin boundaries are under strain, where repeated sleep-walking or Astral crossing has worn the veil thin, or where a dream-event has left enough force behind to be gathered. It may be collected from:

- the immediate edges of an active or recently closed Dream Passage
- sleep shrines, old nurseries, infirmaries, watch-chapels, and vigil sites marked by repeated dreaming
- Astral thresholds and portal rooms with strong dream contamination
- objects saturated by dream contact, such as pillows, masks, child-charms, old toys, blankets, and ritual veils

- sites of failed dream rites, sleep incursions, or symbolic bleed-through
- the bodies or gear of those who have very recently crossed a Dream Passage and not yet fully "settled" back into waking reality

Gathering Dream Passage Residue should never feel trivial. In some places it can simply be bottled, scraped, brushed into folded paper, or coaxed into a charm vessel with patient hands and a proper container. In others it must be harvested with ritual care, whispered names, silvered cloth, or a stabilizing circle so it does not disperse, sour, or react badly to being noticed. The Creepmaster should treat it as a special occult resource rather than a casual commodity. It may be found, earned, harvested, traded, stolen, or distilled from dangerous places, but it should always feel connected to dream geography and never like something bought by the scoop from a respectable market stall.

A reasonable default is that one successful careful gathering yields **one usable portion of Dream Passage Residue**, enough to fuel one Dreamcraft ability that requires it, unless the place is especially rich, especially unstable, or especially sacred to dream traffic.

Learning Dreamcraft

Dreamcraft is rarely learned through ordinary classroom repetition alone. It demands exposure as well as instruction. A Creep may learn it through a dream-touched teacher, an archive of sleep rites, a surviving dream manual, direct passage through a true Dream Passage, prolonged Astral travel, symbolic trials undertaken in sleep, or other story-driven contact with the dreaming infrastructure of the setting. A sorcerer may dabble in Dreamcraft, and many do, but Dreamcraft answers most readily to those who understand that dreams are not nonsense. They are patterns, pressures, landscapes, instincts, fears, and truths wearing masks because masks are easier to survive.

Like Sorcery, Dreamcraft uses **Essence**. Each Dreamcraft ability lists an Essence cost, and that cost is paid on casting whether the effect succeeds or fails, unless the Creepmaster rules that the attempt never properly took hold. Most Dreamcraft workings also require **one portion of Dream Passage Residue** unless the entry says otherwise. If the required residue is missing, the working is usually impossible rather than merely inconvenient. Dreamcraft without residue is like trying to sail without water: a beautiful gesture with poor practical effect.

Mechanically, Dreamcraft abilities are resolved much like Sorcery spells. The user makes a **Dreamcraft** or **Sorcery** test, depending on how the campaign handles the relationship between the arts. If Dreamcraft is treated as a separate learned discipline, use that skill. If it is folded under Sorcery in this module, use **Sorcery** with the understanding that the character must still have access to Dreamcraft training or story permission. Resisted effects follow normal **One-on-One** procedure, using the target's most appropriate Attribute or skill.

What Dreamcraft does differently is not the bones of the mechanic, but the kinds of scenes it changes. These workings are best when the story concerns sleep, symbolic paths, dream intrusion, fragile identity, Astral navigation, false thresholds, portal orientation, memory bleed, and the perilous question of whether the road ahead is a place, a dream, a lie, or all three at once.

Dreamcraft Workings

Thread of Returning

Range/Area: Self, touched companion, or linked travel group up to 4 beings
Duration: Until the journey ends, the thread is broken, or the next waking rest
Essence: 3
Components: 1 portion of Dream Passage Residue
Description:
The dreamcrafter spins a symbolic route-marker through the minds and footsteps of the affected travelers, creating an invisible thread of recognition that helps them remember where they came from even when the road changes shape around them. This working is not a physical line and cannot be seen by ordinary sight. Instead, it manifests as a felt certainty, a repeated image, a tug in the ribs, or a recurring sense that *home* lies in one particular direction through dreamspace or Astral confusion.

While the effect lasts, affected travelers gain **+10** on tests to retrace a path, resist becoming lost in dream logic, identify the true return route through a shifting Astral space, or notice when a passage has subtly changed behind them. In scenes where the path back is threatened by symbolic distortion, looping architecture, or sleep-born misdirection, the Creepmaster should also provide one additional clue pointing toward the true route.

If a hostile force specifically attempts to sever the group's sense of return, resolve it as an opposed test. If the thread is broken, everyone involved feels it immediately.

Sleep-Wake Mark

Range/Area: One door, threshold, archway, gate, portal frame, or narrow passage
Duration: 1 scene, 1 watch, or until crossed by a significant dream-force
Essence: 2
Components: 1 portion of Dream Passage Residue
Description:
The dreamcrafter marks a threshold with the subtle logic of waking memory, teaching it—briefly and imperfectly—the difference between an ordinary crossing and a dream-borne incursion. The mark is usually invisible unless viewed in slant light, reflective surfaces, or active dream-sight, where it may appear as a chalky glimmer, a line of pale motes, or the impression of a child's handprint where no child should be.

While the mark holds, gain **+10** on tests to identify whether the threshold has been tampered with by dream intrusion, Astral passage, glamour-routing, or symbolic redirection. If something dream-touched crosses the marked boundary, the dreamcrafter becomes aware of the crossing immediately, provided they remain nearby or mystically linked to the site.

In portal- or passage-heavy play, this is one of the best ways to know whether the door still leads where it did a moment ago.

Borrow Sleep's Map

Range/Area: Self; one room, immediate portal site, or 20-foot radius of dream-thin terrain
Duration: 1 round per DoS, or one careful examination outside immediate danger
Essence: 3
Components: 1 portion of Dream Passage Residue
Description:
The dreamcrafter closes one set of senses and lets the place describe itself the way a sleeping mind would. This does not reveal everything. It reveals what matters to dream logic: emotional pressure, symbolic

importance, hidden routes that only exist in one state of reality, the places where fear pools, where memory loops, where the veil is weakest, and where a portal or passage is trying very hard not to be noticed.

For the duration, the dreamcrafter gains **+10** on tests to detect Dream Passages, symbolic routes, hidden portal edges, emotional residue, veiled openings, false destination cues, or the "wrongness" of a room. The Creepmaster should also provide at least one additional dream-relevant truth about the area, such as which doorway feels safe, which corner is remembering something, which wall has become symbolic rather than structural, or which route is hungry for travelers.

This working is especially strong in Astral travel scenes, dream-shrines, thin ruins, and places where physical mapping has stopped being enough.

Hush the Sleeper's Panic

Range/Area: Touch or one sleeping / dream-engaged subject within 10 feet
Duration: Instant, or one dream episode / immediate scene
Essence: 2
Components: 1 portion of Dream Passage Residue
Description:
The dreamcrafter reaches gently into the trembling edge between sleep and fear, dampening the surge that turns dream pressure into thrashing panic, nightmare paralysis, sleep-flight, or dream-borne collapse. This working is not domination. It is guidance. It steadies a sleeper, softens the symbolic violence of a dream event, and helps keep a dream-bound mind from being devoured by its own worst momentum.

The target gains **+10** on tests to resist nightmare effects, dream intrusion, sleep panic, symbolic overwhelm, or emotional collapse caused by a dream-state encounter. If the target is already caught in a minor nightmare or dream-loop effect, this working may end it outright on a successful test. In Astral travel play, it is especially useful when one traveler begins to lose coherence or when a sleeping guide risks turning into a liability at exactly the wrong moment.

A willing target is easier to steady. An unwilling or hostile dreaming target may resist normally.

Lantern for the Unwalked Road

Range/Area: Self and immediate companions within 10 feet
Duration: 1 scene of travel, one crossing, or 10 minutes
Essence: 4
Components: 1 portion of Dream Passage Residue
Description:
The dreamcrafter calls up a pale traveling light that does not merely illuminate space—it illuminates **validity**. It shines brightest on paths that can truly be walked, weakest on lies, and flickers strangely before dream-constructed dead ends, false roads, looped corridors, symbolic traps, and portal routes that have not yet settled into stable passage. It may appear as a lantern-glow, a drifting orb, a row of dim childlike footprints, a wavering ribbon of moon-pale mist, or some other fitting expression of navigable certainty.

While this working lasts, the traveling group gains **+10** on tests to move safely through unstable dream terrain, choose between competing portal routes, avoid false crossings, or notice when a road is symbolic nonsense wearing the costume of a real passage. The Creepmaster should also reduce the chance of accidental misrouting, circular travel, or unconscious entry into a hostile symbolic route unless the scene is deliberately overwhelming or actively opposed by a stronger force.

This is one of the signature workings of safe dream travel. It does not make the road kind. It merely makes the lies less convincing.

Using Dreamcraft in Play

Dreamcraft works best when it is allowed to do what ordinary Sorcery does not: protect identity, interpret dream logic, preserve route coherence, manage sleep pressure, and help the Protagonist survive travel through realms where meaning is as dangerous as teeth. It is not primarily about raw damage, battlefield dominance, or conventional elemental spectacle. Its strength lies in orientation, safety, interpretation, symbolic leverage, and the ability to keep the story

coherent when the world begins insisting that coherence is optional.

In campaigns where portals and Astral routes matter, Dreamcraft should feel invaluable. It gives the duo tools for asking the right questions:

- Is this passage real, false, or dream-made?
- Will this road still exist when we turn around?
- Did something cross here while we slept?
- Is that doorway physically open or only symbolically open?
- Are we lost in space, or lost in meaning?
- Which of us is beginning to drift?
- What followed us back?

Sorcery may open the lantern. Dreamcraft tells you whether the light is pointing home or merely hoping you will think so.

BONUS Table!

SPELL CASTING MISHAPS

1d20 Spell Casting Mishaps

Sorcery in **CREEPS!** is powerful, useful, temperamental, and only occasionally willing to behave like a respectable discipline. When a spell goes wrong, it should not always become a disaster worthy of a funeral and three committees. Often it becomes something smaller, stranger, briefly inconvenient, or darkly funny in precisely the way Limbo enjoys most.

Use this table when the Creepmaster wants a failed casting, unstable surge, bad component substitution, dream-tainted interference, or dramatic magical stumble to leave behind a memorable side effect. Most results should last only a scene, a few rounds, or until the next good rest, unless the Creepmaster decides the moment deserves a longer headache.

Roll **1d20**:

1. Lantern Lungs

The caster exhales a puff of pale glowing vapor every time they speak. For the rest of the scene, stealth becomes difficult, but everyone can see exactly where the complaints are coming from.

2. Backward Echo

For **1d4 rounds**, the caster's words repeat backward a heartbeat after they speak. Spellcasting is still possible, but social dignity is not.

3. Borrowed Gravity

The caster becomes slightly too light. For one scene, they gain **+10** on jumps, balance, or leaping away from danger, but suffer **–10** on tests to resist shoves, impacts, or being bowled over.

4. Closet Draft

Every nearby doorway, cabinet, wardrobe, or curtain stirs at once as though something just considered entering. No creature appears, but everyone becomes just a little less comfortable.

5. Soupbone Fingers

The caster's fingers briefly go rubbery and over-articulate in deeply upsetting ways. For **1d4 rounds**, fine manual work suffers **–10**, but attempts to wriggle free of bonds, reach through bars, or retrieve dropped items gain **+10**.

6. Polite Sparks

Tiny harmless sparks orbit the caster's head like well-mannered fireflies. They shed dim light for one scene and occasionally arrange themselves into shapes that seem judgmental.

7. Unwanted Applause

A burst of phantom clapping, gasps, or stage applause erupts around the caster for one round. This ruins

stealth immediately and may improve morale only for people with very strange tastes.

8. Teeth of Frost

The caster's teeth go painfully cold. For one scene, they gain **+10** on resisting heat or fire discomfort, but speaking clearly becomes mildly miserable.

9. Dream-Taste

The caster suddenly tastes something from a dream: birthday cake, pond water, chalk, burnt sugar, old pennies, grief, or all of the above. The next Lore, Dreamcraft, or occult-reading test gains **+10**, but the Creepmaster is encouraged to make the flavor description upsettingly specific.

10. Shadow Delay

For the rest of the scene, the caster's shadow moves half a second late. It provides no direct harm, but anyone who notices it may need a moment to reconsider their relationship with certainty.

11. Accidental Glamour

For **1d4 rounds**, the caster looks dramatically cooler, more terrifying, or more beautiful than usual, according to the spell's tone. Gain **+10** on one relevant Presence-based test, but expect commentary.

12. Moss in the Mouth

The caster coughs up a little harmless puff of soft grey-green moss. For one scene, their voice becomes rich, velvety, and strangely ceremonial. Intimidation or eerie pronouncements gain **+10**; lying casually becomes harder.

13. It Knows Your Name

Somewhere nearby, in a wall, under a bed, or from behind a shut door, the caster hears their own name whispered once. No immediate effect follows. That is, of course, worse.

14. Reverse Sneak

For one round, all the caster's equipment becomes absurdly quiet, but their joints, boots, or clothing produce exaggerated theatrical sneaking noises instead. Gain **+10** to one concealment test if nobody hears the sound first; otherwise suffer mocking forever.

15. Candle Eyes

The caster's eyes glow softly like candle flames for one scene. They gain **+10** on intimidation, eerie presence, or seeing in dim light, but they look like a very bad omen in a children's hallway.

16. Friendly Static

The air around the caster crackles pleasantly. For **1d4 rounds**, touching metal, fur, or other people produces tiny harmless sparks. One failed enemy grapple or grab against the caster may suffer **-10** from surprise and annoyance.

17. Wrong Pocket

A small item on the caster's person vanishes and reappears in a completely different pocket, pouch, sleeve, boot, or hat. If they had no hat, this is an administrative complaint against reality.

18. Sorrow Rain

A brief indoor drizzle falls in a radius around the caster for one round. It smells faintly of old books, wet dust, and emotional regret. Flames may sputter, hair may wilt, and dramatic silence improves substantially.

19. Borrowed Childhood

For one scene, the caster hears or half-remembers one strong childhood emotion that is not necessarily their own. Gain **+10** on one attempt to understand a child, dream, or fear-based entity, but suffer **-10** on the next roll to resist emotional distraction.

20. Perfectly Wrong

The spell technically works, but with one cosmetic flourish nobody asked for: green fire, singing shadows, drifting feathers, crying teacups, glowing footprints, whispered subtitles, or a smell like haunted cinnamon. The Creepmaster chooses something memorable. The effect is harmless, temporary, and impossible to defend with dignity.

Using Spell Mishaps

A mishap should usually do one of three things:

- complicate the scene
- reveal the magical tone of the place
- make everyone remember that sorcery is only pretending to be orderly

They work best when they are brief, flavorful, and just inconvenient enough to matter without overwhelming the actual scene. In **CREEPS!**, magic should feel dangerous, yes—but also personal, mischievous, and occasionally like the universe is laughing with terrible manners.

CHAPTER 7: TASK RESOLUTION IN CREEPS!

Limbo is full of moments that go wrong very quickly.

A latch gives. A child bolts. A Goblin lies badly but convincingly enough. A canal rope snaps. A Dream Passage shivers once too many times. A Warden gets the shield up in time. A Dastard gets the hatch open just before the patrol rounds the corner. An Enchanter remembers the last line of a seal prayer with smoke already in their lungs. A Tracker sees the dragged footprint, the broken chalk, and the drop of glowing slime that means the thing is still close.

The rules in this chapter answer one simple question:

When the outcome is uncertain and the moment matters, what happens next?

In **CREEPS!**, the answer is direct. You roll **d100** against a value that reflects what your Creep can actually do in the current conditions. If the roll is equal to or less than that value, the action succeeds. If it is higher, the action fails. That tells you whether the Creep managed the thing at all.

But that is only the beginning.

One Creep may succeed by a hair, scrambling through the hatch just before it slams shut. Another may succeed with total control, slipping through silently, securing the latch behind them, and hearing the guard coming before the first boot scrapes the corridor. Both succeeded. They did not succeed in the same way.

Likewise, not all failures deserve the same treatment. There is a difference between almost holding the line and dropping the lantern in a puddle of alchemical runoff while your companion screams at you from the rafters.

That is why **CREEPS!** cares not only about success and failure, but about **how strongly** a success lands, and **how badly** a failure turns against you.

This chapter exists to keep the game moving sharply and cleanly. It is not meant to bury every action under arithmetic. It is meant to give the Creepmaster and the players a reliable way to resolve danger, skill, pressure, and consequence in a setting where all four tend to arrive together.

The Core Principle

At the heart of task resolution is one standard:

Roll d100.
– If the result is equal to or less than the relevant modified value, the test succeeds.
If the result is higher, the test fails.

That modified value will usually be a **Skill**. Sometimes it will be a direct **Attribute benchmark** instead, when the action is more about raw capability than practiced training.

The Creepmaster should call for a roll only when three things are true:

- the outcome is genuinely uncertain
- the result matters
- both success and failure would change play in a meaningful way

If success is obvious, do not roll. If failure is guaranteed unless the situation changes first, do not disguise that certainty with dice. The roll exists to resolve uncertainty, not to pretend uncertainty is present when it is not.

Attributes and Skills

Every Creep is defined by six core Attributes:

- **Might**
- **Grace**
- **Endurance**
- **Awareness**
- **Intellect**
- **Presence**

These are rated on the standard One-on-One scale. Most actions in play are resolved through **Skills**, because skills represent what the Creep has actually learned to do under pressure. Attributes still matter constantly, but skills are where training, field habit, and lived experience show themselves.

A Creep may be naturally alert. That does not mean they know how to follow a panic trail through three districts in the rain.
A Creep may be intelligent. That does not mean they can read a damaged portal frame correctly while everyone else is shouting.
A Creep may be strong. That does not mean they know how to hold a corridor against a thing that bites through iron.

Skills turn raw capability into practical competence.

Direct Attribute Tests

Sometimes no skill fits cleanly, or the action is really about brute natural capability rather than learned expertise. In those cases, the Creepmaster may call for a direct Attribute test.

When rolling directly against an Attribute:

Roll d100 against half the relevant modified Attribute.

If the roll is equal to or less than that halved value, the test succeeds.

This should be used when the moment is truly about raw force, reflex, stamina, perception, intellect, or presence without a clearer trained skill taking over.

Examples:

- forcing a jammed hatch with raw bodily effort
- resisting exhaustion during a brutal climb
- noticing the sudden wrongness in a room before anyone speaks
- holding steady in a stare-down where no formal social skill is really appropriate

Modified Skill Value

Before any roll is made, determine the **Modified Skill Value**.

This is the Creep's skill after all immediate conditions have been taken into account. It reflects what the character can do **here**, **now**, under **these conditions**, rather than in an abstract empty practice room where nothing is on fire and no one is crying.

A Modified Skill Value may include:

- the base skill rating
- Advantages
- Disadvantages
- Destiny spending
- any other clear situational adjustments the Creepmaster judges appropriate

This matters because Creeps are never acting in a vacuum. A Tracker is not just "tracking." They are tracking at night, in canal fog, after rainfall, while escorting a frightened kid, with a Glowrat trying to climb into their hood. An Operative is not just "fighting." They are fighting in a stairwell, with bad footing, against something taller than the architecture intended, while the Portal Engineer behind them keeps shouting that the frame cannot take one more shock.

The skill remains the skill. The scene changes the number.

Making a Standard Test

When a test is called for, use the following process:

1. Identify the most appropriate Skill or Attribute.
2. Apply all relevant Advantages, Disadvantages, and other modifiers.
3. Establish the Modified Skill Value.
4. Roll d100.
5. Compare the roll to the Modified Skill Value.

Result

- If the roll is **equal to or less than** the Modified Skill Value: **Success**
- If the roll is **higher than** the Modified Skill Value: **Failure**

That is the basic answer.

Then comes the more interesting one.

Degree of Success and Degree of Failure

In **CREEPS!**, the margin matters.

A narrow success and a commanding success are both successes, but they should not feel identical in play. The same is true of failure. Barely missing a roll is often very different from failing so badly that the room gains a whole new reason to hate you.

That is why the system uses:

- **Degree of Success (DoS)**
- **Degree of Failure (DoF)**

Degree of Success

If the roll succeeds, calculate:

Degree of Success = Modified Skill Value − Roll

The result is the Degree of Success.

The higher the DoS, the cleaner, stronger, faster, sharper, or more controlled the result usually is.

A higher DoS may mean:

- stronger control in a contest
- quicker completion
- better positioning
- cleaner execution
- less noise
- fewer complications
- more effective combat result where margin matters
- stronger progress on a Clock or scene task

A Dastard who succeeds at Lockpicking by 3 got the door open.
A Dastard who succeeds by 28 got the door open, kept

the mechanism clean, and probably has time to look smug before the next problem arrives.

Degree of Failure

If the roll fails, calculate:

Degree of Failure = Roll − Modified Skill Value

The result is the Degree of Failure.

The higher the DoF, the worse the miss tends to be.

A higher DoF may mean:

- more noise
- more exposure
- worse timing
- harsher complication
- lost footing
- damaged tools
- increased suspicion
- greater scene cost
- faster escalation on a danger Clock

A narrow failure means the Creep almost had it.
A severe failure means the scene now has a new and often unpleasant opinion.

Why the Margin Matters

The margin lets the Creepmaster answer not just:

Did you do it?

but also:

How well did you do it?
or
How badly did that go?

That creates texture in exactly the kinds of scenes **CREEPS!** thrives on:

- combat in bad terrain
- stealth in fragile spaces
- social pressure under fear
- portal stabilization
- pursuit through districts
- Dream Passage incidents
- rescue, delay, and containment work

Critical Success and Critical Failure

Some rolls stand apart from ordinary success or failure.

In **CREEPS!**:

- **01–05** is a **Critical Success**
- **95–100** is a **Critical Failure**

This applies to both skill tests and direct Attribute tests.

These are read directly from the dice. They represent extreme outcomes in the moment, not merely strong margins.

Critical Success

A roll of **01–05** is a Critical Success.

This means the action succeeds in an especially strong, clean, lucky, or dramatically useful way, subject to the logic of the scene.

Outside combat, a Critical Success may mean:

- cleaner execution than expected
- extra information
- less time spent
- reduced risk
- an additional advantage gained

- stronger narrative control
- an added benefit appropriate to the action

The Creepmaster should keep the result grounded. Critical does not mean absurd. It means exceptional.

Critical Success in Combat

When an attack roll is a Critical Success, it becomes a **Critical Hit**.

A Critical Hit inflicts:

double weapon dice damage

Only the weapon dice are doubled. Static modifiers remain unchanged unless another rule says otherwise.

So if a weapon normally inflicts **1d6 + modifier**, a Critical Hit becomes **2d6 + modifier**.

Critical Hits in **CREEPS!** should feel sharp, dangerous, and slightly horrifying in the way sudden violence often does in Limbo.

Critical Failure

A roll of **95–100** is a Critical Failure.

This means the action fails in an especially costly, dangerous, noisy, foolish, or destabilizing fashion.

Outside combat, a Critical Failure may mean:

- loss of time
- making noise
- exposing intent
- breaking something
- worsening the scene
- suffering a new complication
- creating Disadvantage on what follows
- advancing a Clock more sharply than usual

Again, keep it grounded. A Critical Failure should matter, but it does not need to become slapstick unless the table's tone clearly wants that.

Critical Failure in Combat

When an attack roll is a Critical Failure, it becomes a **Critical Miss**.

A Critical Miss may mean:

- overextension
- poor footing
- weapon mishandling
- dropped guard
- loss of position
- temporary Disadvantage
- immediate exposure to counterplay

In **CREEPS!**, a Critical Miss should feel dangerous, embarrassing, or both.

Advantage and Disadvantage

CREEPS! does not use fixed target number ladders for ordinary task resolution. It always returns to the same basic structure:

roll d100 against the modified value

The way the scene affects that value is through **Advantages** and **Disadvantages**.

These are not separate dice mechanics. They are the language used to express situational help and hindrance.

- **Advantage** means the circumstances help the Creep
- **Disadvantage** means the circumstances hinder the Creep

The Creepmaster applies these directly to the skill before the roll.

Standard Modifier Bands

The standard bands are:

- **+10 / −10** — clear but moderate edge or hindrance
- **+20 / −20** — major edge or major difficulty
- **+30 / −30** — extreme advantage or punishing hardship

+10 / −10

Use this for ordinary but noticeable conditions.

Examples of **+10**:

- decent tools
- partial cover
- familiar route
- steady footing
- helpful lighting
- calm witness
- cooperative assistant

Examples of **−10**:

- poor light
- slight distraction
- time pressure
- awkward angle
- minor injury
- nervous target
- distracting noise

+20 / −20

Use this when the situation strongly favors or hinders the action.

Examples of **+20**:

- ideal setup
- excellent preparation
- target caught unaware
- perfect leverage
- strong social upper hand
- highly favorable terrain

Examples of **−20**:

- serious injury
- panic
- heavy weather
- severe distraction
- unstable footing
- strong resistance
- pressing danger nearby

+30 / −30

Use this rarely.

Examples of **+30**:

- overwhelming control
- helpless target
- flawless preparation
- near-perfect conditions

Examples of **−30**:

- chaos
- collapse

- extreme fear
- nearly impossible terrain
- violent magical interference
- acting while physically or emotionally near breaking

Stacking

Advantages and Disadvantages can stack, but the Creepmaster should stay disciplined. It is usually better to judge the overall weight of the scene than to count every tiny detail. In most cases, total situational adjustment should stay around **±30**.

If conditions are beyond that, the Creepmaster should usually ask a better question:

- Is the action simply impossible right now?
- Is success obvious if they have the time?
- Should this be a different kind of scene entirely?

Use Advantages and Disadvantages to keep the fiction honest, not to bury the roll under debris.

Destiny

Destiny is the Creep's ability to lean against bad luck, cruel timing, and the general unfairness of living in a world of hidden doors and badly behaved magic.

Each Creep begins with a Destiny pool as established in character creation. Destiny may be spent to directly alter the odds in a moment that matters.

Each point of Destiny may provide:

- **+10 to your own roll**
- and/or **−10 to an opposing roll**, when appropriate

Destiny can stack.

That means a player may spend multiple Destiny points in the same moment if they wish and if they have them available.

Examples:

- spend 1 Destiny for **+10** to your own roll
- spend 2 Destiny for **+20**
- spend 1 Destiny to give an enemy **−10**
- spend 2 Destiny to give yourself **+10** and the enemy **−10**

Destiny is not ordinary Advantage. It is not the room helping you. It is the Creep pushing harder than the moment reasonably expected them to.

In **CREEPS!**, Destiny often shows up in exactly the scenes where the setting feels most itself:

- keeping the latch shut one moment longer
- stopping the child from running through the wrong door
- making the last line of the spell land correctly
- seeing the hidden route through the canal fog
- talking the witness down before their fear feeds the dream-state
- surviving what should have gone worse

Destiny exists so the protagonist feels like the center of a story instead of one more frightened body in a corridor.

Contests

Sometimes the question is not whether a Creep succeeds against the environment, but whether one side overcomes another directly.

These are **Contests**, also called opposed tests.

Examples include:

- Stealth versus watchfulness
- Persuasion versus resistance
- Deception versus Insight
- pursuit versus escape
- grappling versus escape
- command versus panic
- intimidation versus nerve

In a Contest, **both sides roll** against their own modified values.

Resolving a Contest

Each side:

1. identifies the relevant skill or attribute
2. applies all modifiers
3. rolls normally

Then compare the results.

If only one side succeeds

That side wins.

If both sides succeed

Compare **Degrees of Success**.
The side with the **higher DoS** wins.

If both sides fail

Compare **Degrees of Failure**.
The side with the **lower DoF** wins a **Lesser Win**.

If the outcome is effectively tied

Advance the scene with a complication, split result, partial control, or Clock tick as appropriate.

The point of a Contest is to answer who gets their way **right now**, not to stall the scene into endless back-and-forth.

Lesser Wins

The **Lesser Win** is one of the most useful tools in **CREEPS!**.

When both sides fail a Contest, the scene does not freeze. The side that failed **less badly** still gets the immediate edge—but imperfectly.

A Lesser Win means:

- you got what you wanted, but not cleanly
- you forced the moment your way, but paid for it
- you moved forward, but the world bit back

Examples in **CREEPS!** might include:

- you catch the fleeing Truant, but they scream and draw attention
- you force the stuck hatch, but damage the lock and make noise
- you talk the district elder down, but they remain suspicious of the Vigil
- you win the grapple, but both of you go to the floor
- you slip past the patrol, but one of them definitely heard something
- you quiet the witness, but only temporarily
- you finish the seal repair, but the frame will not hold forever

Lesser Wins are excellent for **CREEPS!** because the setting thrives on costly forward motion. The story should keep moving. It should simply move with consequence.

Resolution and Combat

Combat uses the same core task resolution principles as everything else:

- choose the relevant attack skill
- apply modifiers
- roll d100
- determine success or failure
- calculate Degree of Success or Degree of Failure
- check for criticals

A stronger hit is not only a hit—it is often a cleaner, sharper, more damaging, or more controlling one. Margin matters in combat just as it does everywhere else.

The full combat chapter handles damage, defense, AR, wounds, and edge in detail. The important principle here is simple:

Success matters. Margin matters more. Criticals matter most.

When to Roll

The Creepmaster should call for a roll only when the scene improves by having one.

Do **not** roll for every tiny action.
Do **not** roll if nothing meaningful can change.
Do **not** ask for repeated retries with no new cost, pressure, or altered approach.

A good task resolution chapter teaches pace as much as mechanics.

A strong roll should resolve a meaningful moment and push the fiction forward.

Good reasons to roll

- the room may get worse if the Creep fails
- success would change the scene immediately
- there is time pressure
- there is risk of exposure
- someone is resisting
- the action is difficult under the current conditions
- the margin of success matters

Bad reasons to roll

- the action is routine and unpressured
- failure would not change anything
- the Creepmaster wants to "see what happens" without real stakes
- the task can simply be repeated until it works
- the scene would be better resolved through simple narration

Step-by-Step Summary

When a test is needed, use the following process:

1. Choose the Skill or Attribute

Pick the most appropriate skill. If no skill clearly fits, use a direct Attribute test.

2. Establish the Modified Value

Apply Advantages, Disadvantages, Destiny, and any other relevant adjustments.

3. Roll d100

Roll against the Modified Skill Value or halved modified Attribute.

4. Check Success or Failure

- Equal to or under = success
- Over = failure

5. Calculate the Degree

- **DoS = Modified Skill Value − Roll**
- **DoF = Roll − Modified Skill Value**

6. Check for Criticals

- **01–05** = Critical Success
- **95–100** = Critical Failure

7. Apply the Outcome

Resolve the result honestly in the fiction.

That is the engine.

The Spirit of Task Resolution in CREEPS!

CREEPS! should not feel flat.

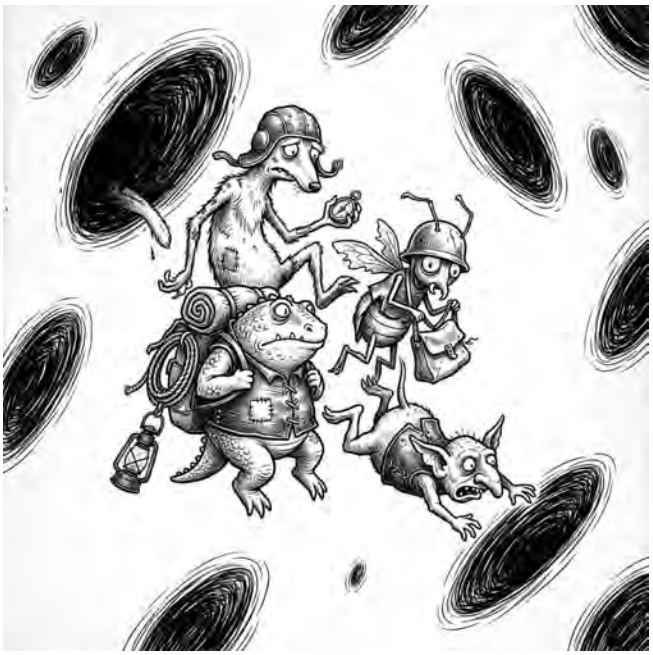
A Tracker may fail a trail roll because canal sludge washed the sign away.
A Night Schooler may succeed at recalling the old warning, but only barely, and only after saying it too late for comfort.
A Binder-Kin may win a contest of instinct against a lurking thing because their companion reacted first.
A Dastard may lose a stealth contest and still earn a Lesser Win—past the checkpoint, but now remembered by exactly the wrong witness.
An Operative may land a Critical Hit and turn a desperate hallway fight into a brief, ugly miracle.
A Portal Engineer may fail the first repair test, understand the problem better because of it, and realize the frame is two breaths from becoming everyone's worst evening.

That is how the chapter should function in play.

Not overburdened.
Not vague.
Not arbitrary.

Just sharp enough to let the weirdness of Limbo breathe through consequence, and clear enough that when the dice fall badly, everyone knows exactly why the room just became more dangerous.

CHAPTER 8: CLOCKS, PRESSURE, AND THE TICKING WEIRD OF LIMBO



In **CREEPS!**, danger rarely arrives all at once.

Sometimes it does, of course. Sometimes a Goblin comes shrieking out of a wardrobe with a knife. Sometimes a canal thing rises out of black water already biting. Sometimes a Dream Passage tears itself wide in the middle of a family stairwell and the room immediately becomes everyone's problem. But more often, real trouble in Limbo grows by degrees. A seal weakens. A district grows uneasy. A frightened child keeps dreaming at the same door. A barricade strains. A pursued Trespasser gets farther than it should. A rumor spreads before the Vigil can get ahead of it. A Warden grows tired. A lantern network begins failing one lamp at a time. The room becomes colder. The sound behind the wall becomes clearer. The truth becomes harder to avoid.

That sort of escalation is what **Clocks** are for.

A Clock is a simple, visible way to track pressure, progress, deterioration, delay, danger, or approaching consequence. In game terms, a Clock is not a separate mini-game and it is not a replacement for the core resolution loop. It is a support tool for scenes where something matters over time. It lets the table see that a situation is moving, changing, worsening, approaching completion, or resisting intervention. It gives shape to tension. It turns "eventually" into something the players can watch coming.

In the One-on-One RPG system, Clocks are especially valuable because they make narrative pressure concrete without dragging play into bookkeeping for its own sake. They preserve the flow of skill tests, contests, and choices, but they also ensure that a threat does not simply hover in vague dramatic fog until the Creepmaster decides it is convenient. A Clock tells everyone that something is happening whether the Protagonist likes it or not. It also tells them that their choices can matter before the final consequence arrives.

In **CREEPS!**, this matters enormously because Limbo is a setting built on unstable conditions. Portals open gradually, then badly. Fear spreads before it crystallizes into panic. Trespassers do not always appear at the moment of breach; sometimes they gather near it first, scenting weakness. A district does not become unmanageable in a single instant. It becomes unmanageable because too many small bad things were left to ripen at once. Clocks give the Creepmaster the means to represent this kind of pressure honestly. They also give the players something invaluable: warning.

That warning is not comfort.

A good Clock does not reassure. It tells the table that a problem exists in a form that can be watched, measured, and perhaps interrupted. A visible Clock can

be deeply unnerving, because everyone can see that the group is running out of time, or one mistake away from escalation, or halfway through a process they did not want to let begin in the first place. This is useful. **CREEPS!** works best when danger feels real but legible. The players should often feel they are making difficult choices under pressure, not stumbling blindly until the Creepmaster reveals what secretly happened offstage.

At the same time, Clocks are not only for impending doom. They can also track progress toward useful, brave, or stabilizing outcomes. A trapped child can be calmed over time. A crowd can be brought under control. A damaged threshold can be reinforced in stages. A district can be Quieted. A suspicious witness can be won over. A bonded companion can gradually find a hidden path. A salvage operation can inch toward success while everything around it becomes noisier and less patient. In these cases, the Clock does not represent decay, but effort. The pressure lies in whether the Protagonist can finish the task before some opposing Clock finishes first.

That tension—between one process and another, one success and one looming failure—is at the heart of how Clocks work best in **CREEPS!**.

What a Clock Represents

A Clock represents one of five broad things:

1. Escalation
Something is getting worse over time. A breach is widening. A mob is turning. A predator is closing. A ritual is nearing completion.

2. Progress
The Protagonist is gradually accomplishing something that cannot or should not be resolved in one roll. A damaged portal is being stabilized. A barricade is being built. A frightened child is being calmed.

3. Capacity
Something has limited endurance before it breaks, flees, collapses, panics, or gives out. A barricade can only hold for so long. An escort group can only remain calm for so long. A wounded NPC can only survive so long without treatment.

4. Discovery
Information is being uncovered, assembled, or made legible over the course of action. A hidden route is being mapped. A dream pattern is being interpreted. A forged report is being exposed.

5. Competition
Two or more forces are advancing toward opposite outcomes. The Vigil is stabilizing the passage while something on the other side is trying to pry it open. The Protagonist is persuading a witness while fear is making the witness shut down. The district is being evacuated while panic is trying to outrun the instructions.

All of these are valid uses. The only real question is whether a scene becomes better, clearer, or tenser when tracked in this way.

If the answer is yes, use a Clock.

The Shape of a Clock

In **CREEPS!**, a Clock uses one of four die-size progress tracks, carried over from broader One-on-One usage:

- **d4 Clock** — short, immediate, fragile, fast-moving
- **d6 Clock** — standard scene pressure
- **d8 Clock** — serious, substantial, or multi-step process
- **d10 Clock** — major operation, layered threat, or enduring scene problem

These are not rolled as randomizers. The die sizes are used as shorthand for how much progress or pressure the Clock can hold before it resolves.

A d4 Clock fills quickly.
A d6 Clock is the standard default.
A d8 Clock suggests sustained effort or larger danger.
A d10 Clock means the matter is broad, stubborn, or severe.

When you choose a Clock size, you are deciding how long the issue should reasonably remain live if the Protagonist engages with it but does not solve it immediately.

Choosing the Right Clock Size

Use a **d4 Clock** for:

- a brief chase through close terrain
- a child's rapidly rising panic
- a guard's suspicion during a single conversation
- a collapsing ledge in the next few moments
- a pack of scavengers closing from nearby tunnels

Use a **d6 Clock** for:

- a standard Alert scene
- stabilizing a moderate passage
- a crowd beginning to turn hostile
- holding a door against repeated impacts
- a dangerous creature circling and testing the scene

Use a **d8 Clock** for:

- a difficult breach event
- district-wide unrest in one neighborhood
- a major rescue effort
- tracking a cunning fugitive across multiple scene beats
- suppressing a spreading magical effect

Use a **d10 Clock** for:

- a full Invasion event
- a district destabilization crisis
- prolonged portal collapse
- major public panic across multiple connected scenes
- a campaign-scale recurring threat nearing culmination

When uncertain, choose **d6**. It is the best general-purpose Clock size in the system.

How Clocks Advance

A Clock advances when the fiction says it should.

That sounds obvious, but it is the most important rule in the chapter. Clocks are not advanced because "a turn passed" unless passing time in that scene genuinely matters. They are not advanced because the Creepmaster wants drama. They are advanced because someone failed, delayed, worsened the situation, took too long, allowed opposition to act unchallenged, or because the situation itself naturally continues developing.

Most commonly, a Clock advances because of:

- a failed skill test
- a contest lost to the opposing force
- a partial success where the Creepmaster rules the action works but costs time
- a deliberate player choice to abandon or delay the issue

- an environmental trigger that was already established in the scene
- a round of combat passing while the scene problem remains active

Standard Advancement

As a default:

- **Minor worsening or ordinary delay**: advance **1 step**
- **Clear failure with serious consequence**: advance **2 steps**
- **Major failure, critical escalation, or disastrous choice**: advance **3 steps**
- **Scene-ending catastrophe**: fill the Clock

Likewise, progress Clocks can be advanced by successful action:

- **Modest progress**: 1 step
- **Strong progress / high DoS / excellent positioning**: 2 steps
- **Extraordinary success, ideal leverage, or a decisive scene action**: 3 steps

You do not need to make this mathematical every time. The Creepmaster should judge honestly and consistently.

Clocks and the Core Resolution Loop

CREEPS! in its One-on-One form still resolves action using the normal skill and attribute mechanics. Clocks do not replace those tests. Instead, they answer a different question:

Not "Did you succeed?"
But "How much does that success or failure matter to the larger process?"

A Creep may succeed at a task and still see an opposing Clock advance because time, noise, or stress made the wider situation worse. Likewise, a failure may still accomplish something small while advancing a danger Clock. This is often desirable. Scenes feel richer when outcomes are not binary.

For example:

- The Protagonist succeeds at **Lockpicking** and opens the hatch, but the **Suspicion Clock** advances because the delay was too long and footsteps are getting closer.
- The Protagonist fails a **Portal Engineering** test, but learns enough from the failure to advance the **Diagnosis Clock** by 1 while also advancing the **Instability Clock** by 2.
- The Protagonist succeeds at **Persuasion** and advances the **Calm the Witness Clock** by 2, but the **Portal Escalation Clock** also advances by 1 because the room is still deteriorating while they talk.

That is good **CREEPS!** play. The scene is moving on several fronts, and the Protagonist must choose what to prioritize.

Hidden and Visible Clocks

A Clock may be **visible** to the players or **hidden** from them.

Visible Clocks

Use visible Clocks when:

- the characters would plainly perceive the pressure
- the danger is already known
- watching the approach of consequence increases tension

- the players should be able to strategize around the remaining time

Examples:

- a barricade holding against impacts
- a portal visibly widening
- a frightened child nearing total panic
- a district lantern-grid failing section by section

Visible Clocks are especially good in **CREEPS!** because many of the setting's tensions are public and sensory. Everyone can hear the door buckling. Everyone can see the seal-lines failing. Everyone knows the crowd is one breath from becoming a stampede.

Hidden Clocks

Use hidden Clocks when:

- the characters do not yet know the danger exists
- the exact severity is unclear
- discovery itself is part of the scene
- visible tracking would reduce fear or mystery too early

Examples:

- a hidden predator slowly closing
- a black-market betrayal ripening behind the scenes
- a Dream Passage gathering emotional pressure in a neighboring room
- a ritual on the far side of a breach nearing completion

A hidden Clock should not feel arbitrary when revealed. The Creepmaster should foreshadow it through the fiction: sounds, signs, delays, rumors, reactions, environmental changes, and partial clues.

Opposed Clocks

One of the strongest ways to use Clocks in **CREEPS!** is with **opposed pairs**.

An opposed Clock structure sets one force against another. The Protagonist advances one while trying to prevent the other from filling first.

Examples:

- **Stabilize the Portal** vs **Portal Rupture**
- **Calm the Child** vs **Nightmare Manifestation**
- **Evacuate the District** vs **Panic**
- **Catch the Trespasser** vs **Escape Route**
- **Quiet the Realm** vs **Alert Escalation**

This creates immediate meaningful choice. The Protagonist may be good at one kind of action but not another. They may have to choose between slowing the bad Clock or speeding the good one. In solo play especially, this is excellent structure: it externalizes pressure without requiring large combat scenes or multiple moving enemy stat blocks.

Clocks in Combat

Clocks are not mandatory in combat, but they are often very useful.

Use them in combat when the fight is about more than defeating the enemy. In **CREEPS!**, that is often the case.

A combat scene may involve:

- holding a threshold
- keeping civilians alive
- preventing a breach from widening
- buying time for an Engineer
- escorting a child across dangerous ground

- surviving until dawn–lantern relays come online
- driving something back before it reaches a frame

In these cases, run the normal fight and add one or more Clocks to track the wider stakes.

Examples of Combat Clocks

Hold the Door (d6)
Advances when enemies batter the barricade, when the Protagonist is driven back, or when no one spends effort bracing it. Fills when the entry gives way.

Portal Rupture (d8)
Advances when spells misfire near the seam, when the threshold takes damage, or when no one works the stabilization procedure. Fills when the portal tears fully open.

Witness Panic (d4)
Advances when civilians see something horrific, take damage nearby, become separated, or are left unattended. Fills when the witness flees, screams, or becomes unusable.

Summoning Completion (d6 or d8)
Advances each round unless actively interrupted. Fills when the hostile arrival or ritual consequence occurs.

Combat Clocks let a fight mean something beyond attrition. That is almost always desirable in a setting built around civic weirdness and threshold emergencies.

Clocks in Investigation

Investigation scenes benefit enormously from Clocks, especially because **CREEPS!** often involves following developing incidents rather than examining frozen corpses in neat locked rooms.

Investigation Clocks may track:

- how much of the truth is uncovered
- how quickly evidence decays
- whether witnesses flee or become unreliable
- how close the culprit is to acting again
- how much institutional patience remains before others interfere

Sample Investigation Clocks

Piece Together the Breach (d6)
Advanced by Investigation, Scholar, Lore, Portal Detection, or Dream Echo depending on the case. Fills when the real nature of the incident becomes clear.

Witness Withdrawal (d4)
Advanced when the witness is pushed too hard, frightened, left waiting, or exposed to renewed stress. Fills when the witness clams up, runs, or becomes unhelpful.

Evidence Spoilage (d4)
Advanced by delay, weather, contamination, magical flux, or crowd interference. Fills when the scene is too damaged to yield further reliable physical information.

Second Incident Imminent (d6)
Tracks how close the unseen threat is to striking again. A strong engine for urgency in serial or repeating incidents.

Investigation Clocks make clues feel alive rather than decorative. They also encourage action. The group cannot simply talk in circles if the evidence itself is beginning to vanish.

Clocks in Social Scenes

Many Creepmasters forget this, but social scenes are some of the best places to use Clocks.

In **CREEPS!**, social pressure often matters because the setting is civic and intimate. Districts remember things. Markets talk. Patrol authority is not infinite.

Children panic. Witnesses disbelieve. Officials interfere. Black-market brokers test boundaries.

Social Clocks may track:

- trust
- suspicion
- fear
- public mood
- rumor spread
- negotiation progress
- patience

Sample Social Clocks

Earn the Witness's Trust (d4 or d6)
Advanced by Persuasion, Insight, Performance, or gentle procedure. Fills when the witness truly cooperates.

Suspicion (d4)
Advanced by contradiction, poor cover stories, odd behavior, and visible panic. Fills when guards, brokers, or civilians begin acting on their distrust.

District Unease (d6)
Tracks neighborhood mood during repeated incidents. Fills when rumor, resentment, or fear create a wider social problem.

Broker Patience (d4)
A perfect black-market Clock. Fills when the broker decides the conversation is over or the price just doubled.

These Clocks are excellent because they remind the table that speech changes the world just as much as steel does.

Clocks for Quiet the Realm

CREEPS! in its One-on-One form should make strong use of **Quiet the Realm** as a recurring procedural response to instability, fear, and threshold pressure. Clocks are ideal for this.

A Quiet the Realm sequence should rarely be one roll. It is better represented as a staged process of calming, sealing, redirecting, grounding, and restoring.

A standard structure might use:

- **Quiet the Realm (d6)** — the player-facing progress Clock
- **Instability Escalation (d6)** — the opposing danger Clock

The Protagonist may advance Quiet the Realm using any appropriate means depending on the scene:

- **Portal Engineering** to correct structure
- **Runes & Glyphs** to restore seal-forms
- **Sorcery** to redirect magical strain
- **Dreamcraft** to calm emotionally reactive conditions
- **Oratory**, **Persuasion**, or **Performance** if a witness or child is feeding the event
- **Vigil Procedures** to get the process right under pressure
- **Concentration** to maintain the work while things worsen

This makes Quiet the Realm feel like an actual mode of play rather than a single binary button. Good. It should feel like work.

How Many Clocks at Once?

As a rule:

- **Solo play:** 1–3 active Clocks is ideal

- **Group Mode**: 2–4 active Clocks is usually enough

More than that and the scene risks losing clarity. Fewer than that and a major scene may feel too flat.

A good default structure for an important **CREEPS!** scene is:

- 1 danger Clock
- 1 progress Clock
- 1 human or environmental Clock

For example:

- **Portal Rupture**
- **Stabilize the Frame**
- **Child Panic**

That gives the Creepmaster enough moving pressure to create choice without creating clutter.

Creating Good Clocks

When creating a Clock, answer these questions:

What is happening?
Name the process in plain language.

Why does it matter?
Make the consequence specific.

How fast should it move?
Choose d4, d6, d8, or d10.

What causes it to advance?
List the obvious triggers.

What fills it?
State the result clearly.

Can the players interact with it?
If not, it may not be a useful Clock.

Naming Clocks Well

Bad Clock name:
Bad Stuff

Good Clock names:
The Closetway Opens
Crowd Panic
The Lantern Grid Fails
Seal Fracture
Witness Trust
The Trespasser Escapes

A good name tells the table what the process is.

Clocks and Degrees of Success

Because One-on-One uses Degrees of Success and Failure, Clocks pair beautifully with that logic.

You do not need a rigid chart, but the following guideline works well:

On success

- Small DoS: 1 Clock step
- Strong DoS: 2 Clock steps
- Excellent DoS: 3 Clock steps

On failure

- Small DoF: opposing or danger Clock advances 1
- Serious DoF: advances 2
- Severe DoF: advances 3 or immediately triggers a complication

This keeps Clocks feeling integrated into the actual engine rather than stapled onto it.

Creepmaster Guidance: Be Fair, Not Timid

The Creepmaster should use Clocks honestly.

If the group delays, a danger Clock should advance. If they split focus badly, something should worsen.

If they take a clever, committed, high-leverage action, a progress Clock should move meaningfully.

Do not use Clocks to punish initiative.
Do not use Clocks to protect your planned scenes.
Do not hide advancement that should be visible.
Do not leave a Clock static because you feel guilty about consequences.

Players trust Clocks when the Creepmaster uses them with integrity. Once that trust exists, Clocks become one of the strongest tension tools in the game.

Practical table method:
Use a single die in the open to represent a Clock (**d4, d6, d8, d10**). Start at "1" and advance the face as the Clock ticks. Let the Creep watch the numbers change and decide where they want to bleed, burn Destiny, or bargain to push those numbers back down.

Sample CREEPS! Clocks

Below are ready-to-use examples.

Child Panic (d4)

The child is overwhelmed by the scene.

Advances when:

- left alone with visible horror
- spoken to harshly
- physically endangered
- confronted with obvious magic or monsters

Fills when:

- the child screams, runs, freezes completely, or feeds the local dream-state in a dangerous way

Seal Fracture (d6)

A warded threshold is breaking down.

Advances when:

- structural damage occurs nearby
- spells are cast carelessly around it
- hostile entities press the frame
- no one stabilizes it during a scene round where pressure matters

Fills when:

- the seal fails and the breach widens or opens

Quiet the Realm (d6)

The scene is being calmed, grounded, and restored.

Advances when:

- correct magical or procedural actions succeed
- witnesses are soothed
- local symbolic damage is repaired
- the right stabilizing actions are taken in sequence

Fills when:

- the immediate event is contained and the area becomes calm enough for ordinary response procedures to resume

District Rumor Spread (d8)

The story of the incident is getting away from the Vigil.

Advances when:

- witnesses escape control
- obvious horrors are seen publicly
- officials bungle communication
- black-market channels start circulating embellished versions

Fills when:

- the district's social mood changes and later scenes are affected by fear, rumor, resentment, or opportunism

Hold the Passage (d6)

The threshold or lane is under physical pressure.

Advances when:

- defenders are driven back
- barricades crack
- enemies gain position
- no one spends effort maintaining the defense

Fills when:

- the enemy force breaks through

Nightmare Coalescence (d8)

A dream-fed presence is becoming real enough to matter physically.

Advances when:

- fear spikes in the area
- dream logic is reinforced
- the source emotional pattern is not interrupted
- the players misread symbolic clues or strengthen the wrong resonance

Fills when:

- the nightmare fully manifests as a tangible scene threat

Final Thought

Clocks are one of the best tools in **CREEPS!** because Limbo is a world of developing trouble.

Not all danger begins with initiative.
Not all heroism looks like attack rolls.
Not all victory comes from defeating an enemy in a room.

Sometimes the real fight is calming the witness before the dream catches.
Sometimes it is sealing the frame before the street goes bad.
Sometimes it is holding a stairwell for three more breaths.
Sometimes it is getting the truth before panic, rumor, or darkness finishes its own work.

A Clock makes that struggle visible.

And once it is visible, the players can do what Creeps are meant to do:

see the weirdness coming, step toward it anyway, and try to keep Limbo in one piece for another night.

CHAPTER 9: COMBAT & HARM

Combat in Limbo is rarely graceful.

It is fought in crooked halls, dripping stairwells, market wreckage, pantry doors, canal walks, school ruins, fungal lanes, and all the damp little places where the architecture clearly resents being asked to host violence in the first place. It happens by lantern-glow, mold-light, bad moonlight, smoke, spore haze, dream shimmer, and the kind of darkness that makes every shadow seem briefly employable by hostile forces. It is interrupted by crying children, terrified witnesses, rattling shutters, cracking seal-lines, worried companions, badly timed heroics, and at least one person yelling something procedural while everyone else is trying not to die.

That is as it should be.

CREEPS! combat should not feel like a tournament. It should feel like an emergency.

A good combat chapter for this setting cannot only explain how to hit. It must explain how to hold a doorway, keep a witness alive, spoil a ritual, stop a thing from reaching the stairs, buy an Engineer time, shove a Goblin off a cart, survive a canal rail breaking underfoot, and keep fighting after the room itself has begun acting like an interested third party. In Limbo, combat is rarely only about defeating an enemy. It is usually about defeating an enemy **before** something worse happens.

This chapter presents combat as an extension of the game's core task resolution rules. It does not replace the standard d100 roll-under structure. Instead, it sharpens it for violent, pressured scenes where timing, footing, margin, and consequence matter more than polite abstractions. You will still use Skills. You will still modify those Skills with Advantages, Disadvantages, and Destiny. You will still calculate Degree of Success and Degree of Failure. The difference is that combat turns those outcomes into bodily harm, positional control, tactical pressure, and immediate scene consequences.

In other words: the rules remain familiar. The room just becomes less forgiving.

What Combat Means in CREEPS!

A fight in **CREEPS!** is not a sealed minigame cut off from the rest of play. It is one more kind of scene pressure, albeit a louder one.

Combat should always answer questions such as:

- Who holds the route?
- Who is exposed?
- Who is hurt?
- Who reaches the child?
- Does the threshold hold?

- Does the witness panic?
- Does the thing get through the passage?
- Does the patrol maintain control of the scene?
- Does the room become worse while everyone is busy stabbing?

If the answer after several exchanges is "nothing much changed," then the fight is being asked to do too little. Combat in **CREEPS!** should move the fiction. Every exchange should alter position, safety, momentum, harm, or pressure in some way.

This does **not** mean every exchange must be wildly theatrical. It means the scene should remain alive. A successful strike should change something. A failed defense should change something. A desperate hold at a doorway should change something. A brutal little Lesser Win in a pantry stair should change something. The game is at its best when combat feels like a living struggle inside a larger dangerous situation rather than a polite queue of attacks waiting for arithmetic to finish.

Core Combat Principle

Combat uses the same central rule as everything else in the game:

Roll **d100** against the relevant **modified Skill value**.
If the roll is equal to or less than that value, the action succeeds.
If the roll is higher, it fails.

That remains the foundation.

Then, because this is combat, you determine:

- whether the attack or maneuver really landed
- how decisively the exchange was won
- whether damage was inflicted
- whether the exchange instead produced position or control
- whether active scene pressure, such as a Clock, changes as a result

That is the engine. Clear. Direct. Dangerous.

Starting a Combat Exchange

Each combat exchange begins with intent.

Before the dice are rolled, the player should say what the Creep is trying to accomplish. "I attack" is sometimes enough, but the game becomes much stronger when intent is stated more clearly.

Examples:

- "I stab the Goblin before it reaches the child."
- "I keep the thing in the doorway."
- "I shove it off the stair."
- "I get between the witness and the canal rail."
- "I pin its arm so the Engineer can work."
- "I drive it back through the threshold."
- "I break contact and retreat toward the others."
- "I spoil the ritual before the chant finishes."
- "I hit hard enough to make it stop advancing."

These statements tell the Creepmaster what success would mean. That, in turn, tells the table whether the outcome is primarily about damage, position, control, protection, delay, or escape.

Choosing the Relevant Skill

Most combat exchanges will use one of the direct combat skills:

- **Blades**
- **Blunt Weapons**

- **Polearms**
- **Archery**
- **Brawling**
- **Shields**
- **Natural Attack**
- **Tunnel Fighting**

But combat is not limited to these. Depending on the action, other skills may be appropriate:

- **Athletics** to leap, ram, wrench, haul, or force through
- **Stealth** for ambush entry
- **Intimidation** to break weak nerve in a fight
- **Tactics** to coordinate or exploit a battlefield opening
- **Sorcery** for offensive or disruptive magical action
- **Dreamcraft** for dream-reactive pressure in combat
- **Portal Engineering** when the threshold itself is part of the fight
- **Vigil Procedures** when the action is specifically about correct containment under pressure

Always ask: what is the Creep actually doing?

Pick the skill that best matches that answer.

Establishing Position

Before the roll, the Creepmaster should state the current tactical reality clearly enough that everyone knows what is true right now.

This includes things like:

- distance
- lighting
- footing
- cover
- crowding
- chokepoints
- witness locations
- where companions are
- whether the portal is active
- whether panic is building
- whether the enemy is already through the route

Combat in **CREEPS!** depends heavily on situational truth. A fight on a dry open stone floor is not the same as a fight on wet canal boards with a terrified child behind you and a half-stabilized frame humming to your right. Those truths affect modifiers, positioning, control outcomes, and how much harm a scene can tolerate before it changes shape.

Range and Distance

CREEPS! uses narrative range bands rather than exact counted measurement.

Use the following bands:

- **Reach**
- **Close**
- **Near**
- **Far**
- **Extreme**

Reach

Touching distance. Grappling distance. Knife-and-shield distance. The range of fists, claws, bites,

headbutts, and all the deeply regrettable intimacy of corridor violence.

Close

Across a room, short corridor, market stall gap, or immediate alley. Very common in Limbo. Most fights quickly collapse into Close or Reach because rooms are rude and stairwells are worse.

Near

Across a lane, small chamber, broad stair, canal walk, workshop floor, or short yard. A useful skirmish distance for missile attacks, movement under pressure, and scene transitions before everyone starts screaming.

Far

Across a long street, large hall, broad ruin, or extended sightline. Less common in cramped districts, more common in exposed spaces, terraces, quays, and larger structural zones.

Extreme

Long, difficult lines where visibility, wind, interruption, or distance are major factors. Rare indoors. Rarely comfortable anywhere.

Creepmaster note: true Far and Extreme lines are much less common in Limbo than players often imagine. Streets curve, stairwells break sight, interiors crowd, districts clutter, and half the city appears to have been designed by suspicious cupboards.

Advantages, Disadvantages, and Destiny in Combat

Combat uses the same modifier language as the rest of the game.

Advantages and Disadvantages modify the acting skill directly. The standard bands remain:

- +10 / −10
- +20 / −20
- +30 / −30

Common Sources of Advantage

Position

- higher ground
- controlling a doorway
- fighting from behind cover
- enemy partially trapped in architecture
- clear line while the enemy is crowded

Timing

- ambush
- enemy distracted
- target still emerging from a threshold
- attack lands before the foe fully reorients

Preparation

- ready stance
- braced shield
- set spear
- known retreat route
- supportive ally positioning

Psychological Edge

- enemy startled
- weak-willed opponent under pressure
- public fear working in your favor
- creature reacting badly to light, sound, or symbolic disruption

Common Sources of Disadvantage

Bad Ground

- wet stone
- canal slime
- broken flooring
- rubble
- unstable stairs
- fungal slick

Cramped Conditions

- no room to swing
- low ceiling
- too many bodies in the lane
- confined striking angle

Poor State

- wounded
- carrying someone
- exhausted
- shaken
- poor visibility
- distracted by scene pressure

Supernatural Interference

- active dream distortion
- portal pulse
- threshold pressure
- magical backlash
- aura dread
- rooms behaving in socially unacceptable ways

Destiny in Combat

Destiny works in combat exactly as elsewhere.

A Creep may spend Destiny to:

- gain **+10** to their own roll per point
- impose **−10** on an opposing roll per point, where appropriate

Destiny stacks.

Combat is one of the most common places for Destiny to matter, but it should not be used casually. It is best spent where the exchange matters to more than pride:

- holding the passage
- protecting a witness
- landing the hit before the threshold ruptures
- keeping the enemy off the Engineer
- buying the final second for the route to close

Resolving an Exchange

Once intent, skill, position, and modifiers are clear, resolve the exchange.

Step-by-Step Combat Exchange

1. Declare the intent
2. Choose the relevant skill
3. Apply Advantages, Disadvantages, and Destiny
4. Roll d100
5. Determine Success or Failure
6. If opposed, compare margins as normal
7. If the exchange produced a real hit, calculate Edge and damage
8. If the exchange produced control instead, apply the positional result
9. Advance any affected Clocks or scene pressures honestly

That is the full loop.

Success, Lesser Win, and Failure

Combat still uses the same outcome logic as the rest of **CREEPS!**.

Success

The Creep achieves the declared combat intent.

If the intent was to inflict harm, the hit lands and damage may be rolled.
If the intent was control, the target is driven, pinned, delayed, disarmed, blocked, or otherwise handled as intended.

Lesser Win

The Creep gets what they wanted, but with a cost.

In combat, a Lesser Win may mean:

- you drive the foe back but take a hit in return
- you grab the witness but lose your footing
- you hold the doorway but advance the instability Clock
- you disarm the Goblin but drop your lantern
- you win the grapple but both of you go down

Lesser Wins are excellent in **CREEPS!** because they keep scenes moving without pretending violence is clean.

Failure

The Creep does not achieve the combat intent.

The enemy keeps or gains the edge, inflicts harm, claims position, escapes, reaches the witness, or otherwise worsens the situation.

Failure in combat should matter immediately.

Edge: How Decisively the Hit Lands

Not every successful hit lands with the same force.

Sometimes a strike barely gets through. Sometimes it lands with total tactical control—clean timing, exposed target, poor defense, bad footing, and all the ugly little truths that make one hit feel like a warning and another feel like a life decision.

That difference is measured by **Edge**.

Edge represents how decisively the attacker controlled the exchange at the moment harm was inflicted. It includes timing, positioning, target exposure, defensive failure, and the degree to which the exchange belonged to the attacker.

When to Calculate Edge

Calculate Edge only when:

- the attacker wins the exchange
- the exchange inflicts real bodily harm
- damage is actually being rolled

If the exchange is purely positional or controlling, Edge is not needed.

Calculating Edge

If attacker wins with success vs failure

Edge = attacker DoS + defender DoF

This is the most common case.

If both succeed and attacker wins

Edge = attacker DoS − defender DoS

Both sides did something right, but the attacker still came out ahead. Edge measures by how much.

If attacker wins by mutual failure (Lesser Win)

Default assumption: this is a **positional Lesser Win**, not a damage result.

If the Creepmaster allows damage on a mutual-failure attacker win, treat the attack as having:

Edge Damage Bonus: +0

That kind of ugly mutual failure may hurt, but it should not gain a significant Edge bonus unless the fiction is extraordinarily persuasive.

Edge Damage Bonus Table

Once Edge is calculated, apply the following bonus to the rolled damage:

Edge	Edge Damage Bonus
0–9	+0
10–19	+2
20–29	+4
30+	+6

This bonus is added to rolled damage before AR is applied.

What Edge Means in the Fiction

A hit with **Edge 3** may be:

- clipped flesh
- shield-rattling bruising
- a fast glancing cut
- a hit that landed but did not own the whole moment

A hit with **Edge 16** may be:

- a clean strike into a bad opening
- a hit delivered while the foe was off-balance
- a nasty shove-cut combination
- a well-earned blow after tactical control

A hit with **Edge 31** may be:

- a devastatingly dominant exchange
- a strike delivered when the target had no good answer
- the sort of hit that changes the emotional weather of the scene immediately

Use Edge to keep damage feeling tied to how the exchange actually unfolded.

Critical Hits and Critical Misses

Combat honors the game's standard critical ranges.

- **01–05** = Critical Success
- **95–100** = Critical Failure

Critical Hit

A Critical Success on an attack becomes a **Critical Hit**.

A Critical Hit adds:

one additional die of the weapon's listed damage

So if the attack normally inflicts **1d6**, a Critical Hit inflicts **2d6** before Edge and AR are applied.

Critical Miss

A Critical Failure on an attack becomes a **Critical Miss**.

A Critical Miss may cause:

- overextension
- loss of footing
- exposed recovery
- dropped weapon
- bad position
- sudden enemy opening
- embarrassing noise at the worst time

Keep it grounded in the scene. In **CREEPS!**, Critical Misses should often be dangerous, and sometimes humiliating in a way the patrol will absolutely bring up later.

Damage, AR, and Harm

When a real hit lands, roll damage.

Weapons, natural attacks, spells, and harmful effects list their damage dice. Roll the appropriate damage, add any Edge bonus, then apply AR.

Damage Sequence

1. Roll the attack's damage dice
2. Add Critical Hit extra die if applicable
3. Add Edge Damage Bonus
4. Apply AR
5. Convert the remaining Damage Score into a Wound Tier

Armor Rating (AR)

AR is a direct reduction to incoming damage.

Subtract the defender's AR from the total damage after Edge has been added.

AR matters. It can turn dangerous hits into merely ugly ones. It can keep a Creep standing long enough to matter one exchange longer than expected. It can also fail to save anyone from the consequences of bad positioning, good enemy timing, or deeply impolite monster strength.

If AR reduces damage to 0, the strike may still matter fictionally:

- bruising
- shock
- shield rattle
- loss of breath
- noise
- footing loss
- gear stress
- a Clock tick
- a witness panic spike

Protection is not invulnerability.

Wound Tiers

After AR is applied, compare the remaining Damage Score to the following wound tiers:

- **1–6**: Light Wound
- **7–12**: Medium Wound
- **13–18**: Severe Wound
- **19+**: Critical Wound

This keeps harm readable, fast, and serious.

Healthy

No wound penalties apply.

The Creep may still be stressed, rattled, bruised, or exhausted from the scene, but nothing has yet risen to wound-tier consequence.

Light Wound

The Creep suffers **−10** to relevant physical actions.

A Light Wound is painful, irritating, and real, but not yet crippling.

Examples:

- shallow cut
- bruised ribs
- bitten forearm
- twisted ankle
- jolted shield arm
- fast glancing burn

Medium Wound

The Creep suffers **−20** to relevant actions.

A Medium Wound changes behavior. The Creep is still in the scene, but the fight has become expensive and future decisions should begin acknowledging survival.

Examples:

- deep cut
- cracked limb
- strong puncture
- heavy body blow
- significant burn
- ugly fall impact

Severe Wound

The Creep suffers **−30** to relevant actions.

At this point, combat becomes a matter of extraction, desperation, or one final hard act before the body ceases to be cooperative.

Examples:

- major bleeding
- collapsed leg
- badly ruined shoulder
- heavy crushing trauma
- dangerous magical injury
- near-incapacitating wound

Critical Wound

The Creep is **Down**.

This means incapacitated, broken, unconscious, bleeding out, pinned, or otherwise no longer meaningfully controlling the fight.

The exact fiction depends on the scene:

- sprawled unconscious
- trapped under debris
- half-dragged by the creature
- collapsed against a wall
- hanging from a broken stair edge
- conscious but no longer combat-capable

Critical Wounds are not mild inconveniences. This is the line where combat becomes aftermath.

Wound Stacking

Repeated harm matters.

Use the following approach:

Higher New Wound

If a new wound tier is higher than the current wound tier, replace the current tier with the new one.

Equal New Wound

If the new wound tier equals the current wound tier, escalate the Creep one tier upward.

Example:

- currently Medium
- take another Medium
- now Severe

Lower New Wound

If the new wound tier is lower than the current wound tier, the lesser wound still contributes to overall deterioration. Track it in the fiction, and if repeated lesser harm keeps accumulating under a worse active wound, the Creepmaster should escalate when it becomes clear the Creep is being steadily overwhelmed.

The principle is simple: once hurt, continued hurt remains dangerous.

Control Instead of Damage

Not every successful combat action is about injuring the enemy.

Many of the best combat outcomes in **CREEPS!** are positional and controlling.

Common control intents include:

- disarm
- trip
- shove
- pin
- drive back
- block the route
- cover a retreat
- protect someone
- break contact
- spoil a ritual
- keep something off a witness
- hold a threshold

Success with Control

The effect happens as intended.

Lesser Win with Control

The effect happens, but the scene takes a bite out of the Creep in return.

Failure with Control

The enemy holds, counters, escapes, or imposes control instead.

Creepmasters should encourage control play. It is one of the biggest ways **CREEPS!** combat distinguishes itself from empty damage trading. Often, the important question is not “can you kill it?” but “can you stop it from reaching the wrong thing in time?”

Combat Magic

Magic belongs in combat, but it should be organized and clear.

It is best treated as a subsection of combat rather than as a parallel combat engine. Magical actions still use the same task resolution structure: choose intent, choose skill, modify the roll, resolve the exchange.

Sorcery in Combat

Sorcery handles direct magical workings, structured offensive effects, ritual combat techniques, and other formalized magical actions.

Sorcery in combat may be used to:

- inflict direct harm
- disrupt enemy positioning
- interfere with hostile magic
- protect a route
- suppress a surge
- reinforce a barrier
- buy time

If the Sorcery action lands as a real harmful hit:

- roll its damage
- add Edge bonus if appropriate
- apply AR if the fiction allows
- convert to wound tier

If the effect is more about control, apply the control result instead.

Dreamcraft in Combat

Dreamcraft is often less direct than Sorcery, but no less powerful in the right scene.

Dreamcraft in combat may be used to:

- destabilize a nightmare presence
- shape dream-reactive space
- calm or redirect emotional pressure
- interfere with symbolic or fear-fed threats
- create situational Advantage or Disadvantage
- alter the room's emotional geometry long enough to matter

Dreamcraft often affects Clocks, morale, or scene pressure as much as it affects bodies.

Portal and Rune Work in Combat

Sometimes the fight is happening because the threshold, seal, or magical structure is itself part of the battle.

In those cases:

- **Portal Engineering** may be used to stabilize, suppress, or redirect the frame
- **Runes & Glyphs** may be used to repair, break, or manipulate symbolic protections or wards
- **Vigil Procedures** may be used when the issue is less mystical than procedural containment under fire

These actions are often best handled as control, support, or Clock-driving actions rather than direct attacks.

Casting Under Pressure

Combat is a bad place for calm magical work.

That means magic in a fight often carries:

- Disadvantage from pressure
- risk of scene escalation on failure
- risk of instability near active thresholds
- heavy dependence on Concentration, position, and protection

That tension is desirable. In **CREEPS!**, magic should feel useful, powerful, and also like the sort of thing that becomes everybody's problem if mishandled in a crowded room.

Clocks in Combat

Combat scenes in **CREEPS!** often benefit from active Clocks.

Common combat Clocks include:

- **Hold the Door**
- **Portal Rupture**
- **Witness Panic**
- **Summoning Completion**
- **Barricade Failure**
- **Crowd Break**
- **Quiet the Realm**
- **Thing Reaches the Child**

Every exchange should be considered not only for bodily harm, but for how it affects the wider pressure.

A Creep may land the hit and still let the **Portal Rupture** Clock advance.
A Warden may lose the exchange but keep **Witness Panic** from filling.
A Dastard may fail to wound but buy time on **Escape Route Sealed**.

This keeps combat integrated with the larger scene, which is where **CREEPS!** wants it.

Common Combat Complications

CREEPS! combat gains much of its identity from local complications.

Use these freely where appropriate:

Blood-Slick Stone

The ground worsens as the fight continues.

Lantern Failure

Dropped or broken light changes everything immediately.

Panic Crush

Witnesses or civilians begin making movement impossible.

Threshold Hum

The active portal interferes with timing, nerve, or magical work.

Splintered Cover

Furniture, stalls, or shutters become both hazard and shield.

Broken Rail

A shove now risks a real fall.

Dream Feedback

The scene begins emotionally reacting to violence.

Ritual Progress

Every exchange not spent interrupting the rite worsens the larger problem.

Structural Collapse

The room is becoming less available for future bravery.

These are not separate mechanics. They are scene truths that should influence modifiers, Clocks, and outcomes.

Resolve and Breaking in Combat

Not every fight is won when the other side falls over. Sometimes it is won because the other side breaks.

When morale, panic, dread, or will under pressure matters, use the game's existing tools:

- **Presence** for courage and composure
- **Endurance** for sheer grit under pain
- an appropriate skill such as **Intimidation**, **Oratory**, **Dreamcraft**, or **Vigil Procedures** depending on the moment

A creature, witness, patrol member, or crowd may:

- hold
- falter
- freeze
- recoil
- flee
- break contact
- collapse emotionally

This is especially useful in **CREEPS!**, because many dangerous things are not disciplined soldiers. They are frightened, reactive, predatory, unstable, dream-fed, or simply not interested in remaining where the room has become too much trouble.

Ending Combat

Combat should end when the meaningful question is resolved.

Do not drag out the final scraps of a scene after the real answer is obvious.

End combat when:

- one side escapes
- one side is disabled
- one side surrenders
- one side is driven off
- the objective is secured
- the objective is lost
- the active Clock changes the scene so radically that the fight is now something else
- only aftermath remains

Examples:

- the Goblin vanishes into the canal dark
- the witness is safely through the route and the barricade is up
- the threshold is stabilized and the hostile thing is forced back
- the district bell sounds and the fight gives way to evacuation
- the room ruptures and now everyone has different priorities
- the last threat is cornered and no longer in position to matter

Once combat ends, move immediately to consequence:

- who is hurt
- who is missing
- what broke
- what worsened
- what was saved
- what still hums unpleasantly in the wall
- what the district will remember about this
- whether the room is now safe, merely quieter, or still absolutely unacceptable

Final Combat Principle

Combat in **CREEPS!** should always feel like struggle under bad conditions.

The system is not trying to create polished symmetry. It is trying to create meaningful, dangerous, vivid exchanges in a setting where violence usually happens because something else has already gone wrong.

So the Creepmaster should always keep one question at hand:

What is this fight really about?

If it is only about damage, the scene may still work. If it is about a passage, a child, a witness, a seal, a district, a route, a panic, a ritual, or a thing getting one step closer to where it should never be, it will work much better.

Because in Limbo, the best combat scenes are not remembered for how many rounds they lasted.

They are remembered for the door that held.
The hand that grabbed the child in time.
The Goblin knocked off the stair.
The Engineer bought one more breath.
The witness who did not break.
The nightmare forced backward.
The lantern relit at the last possible moment.
And the Creep who was, against all reasonable civic expectation, still standing when it was over.

CHAPTER 10: DEATH, ECHOES, AND THE ASTRAL BEYOND

Not all endings are final in the same way.

For most creatures in most places, death is death: the body fails, the self loosens, and what remains becomes the business of grave rites, mourning customs, opportunistic scavengers, and whichever theologian is most confident that evening. Creeps, however, exist in a stranger relationship to the worlds around them. Limbo shapes them. The Dream Paths brush against them. The Astral touches too much of their reality for their deaths to behave with full obedience when they are too far from home.

In practical terms, a Creep can only truly and finally die while **within Limbo itself**.

This does not make Limbo safe. Quite the opposite. It means Limbo is the one place where the body, the self, and the world agree enough to make mortality settle properly. If a Creep suffers mortal harm in Limbo and cannot be saved, then that death is real in the ordinary and terrible sense. The Vigil may recover the body, the district may mourn, the bonded companion may refuse food for three days, and the surviving Creeps may carry the weight of the loss forward.

But outside Limbo, along the **Astral Paths** or in a realm directly joined through Astral transit, death behaves differently.

A Creep brought to the threshold of death in such places does not pass cleanly out of existence. Instead, they persist as an **ephemeral Echo**.

The Echo State

An Echo is not full life, and it is not proper death.

It is the remnant-pattern of the Creep held in unstable continuity by Astral connection. Memory, temperament, identity, and emotional impression remain, but not in the reliable, bodily way they once did. An Echo may appear ghostlike, half-real, dream-edged, or symbolically distorted by the realm in which it lingers. One might flicker like lantern light in rain. Another might leave footprints in dust without fully casting a shadow. Another may only be heard in mirrors, in dreams, or in the reflective surfaces of water and polished metal.

The exact presentation should suit the tone of the scene and the nature of the place.

What matters is this:

- the Creep is not wholly gone
- the Creep is no longer properly alive
- the Creep cannot continue ordinary play as if nothing happened
- the Echo exists in a state that invites rescue, ritual, bargain, or catastrophe

An Echo may:

- speak
- remember
- plead
- guide
- warn
- become trapped
- be pursued
- degrade over time
- interact with local symbolism, dream residue, or Astral structures in unsettling ways

An Echo should never feel comfortable. It is a condition of unfinished existence.

Mechanical Treatment of the Echo

If a Creep would die while in the Astral Paths or in a realm directly connected through the Astral, they do not suffer final death immediately. Instead:

- their body is considered lost, destroyed, or no longer ordinarily recoverable
- their identity persists as an **Echo**
- the Echo exists at the Creepmaster's discretion as a narrative state, not as a normal healthy playable body
- the surviving group may attempt to recover, restore, resurrect, or follow the Echo through whatever means the campaign allows

The Echo state is not meant to function as ordinary play with a "ghost template." It is a transitional condition, and one charged with danger, mystery, and consequence.

Depending on the tone of the campaign, the Echo might:

- remain nearby for a short time
- become difficult to reach
- be anchored to a site, object, or path
- be vulnerable to dissolution, capture, corruption, or drift
- require immediate pursuit if the group wants any realistic chance of restoring the fallen Creep

Resurrection from the Echo State

If a Creep Echo is successfully restored, resurrected, reconstituted, recalled, or otherwise returned to embodied life, they do not simply reappear where they fell.

Instead, they **reincarnate into their original form** in a **completely random dimension, plane, or realm connected to the Astral Plane**.

Their form is recognizably and truly their own. This is not a transformation into a different being. It is the same Creep, same essential identity, same original body-pattern, restored.

But they return somewhere else.

Not nearby.
Not conveniently.
Not necessarily safely.
And very likely not somewhere the Vigil has proper maps for.

This means resurrection in **CREEPS!** is not merely recovery. It is a new problem.

It may produce:

- a rescue arc
- a dimensional chase
- a scrying and tracking mission

- a bureaucratic nightmare within the Vigil
- a black-market scramble for planar routes
- an Astral navigation campaign
- a reunion complicated by the fact that the resurrected Creep is now stranded in a realm of glass deserts, carnivorous churches, moonlit fungal rain, or aggressively polite bone merchants

In other words, resurrection is possible, but it is never tidy.

Creepmaster Guidance on Echoes and Reincarnation

This rule should be treated as rare, significant, and full of story weight.

It should not trivialize danger in Astral travel. The Echo state is not a safety net in the ordinary sense. It is a stranger fate, one that preserves the possibility of return at the cost of immediate certainty and future complication.

Use it to emphasize that:

- the Astral does not release identity easily
- Creeps are bound to larger transitive realities than they fully understand
- survival outside Limbo may come with terrible displacement
- losing a Creep beyond Limbo can become an entire chapter of the campaign

When a player knows this rule exists, the emotional tone of Astral travel changes in a useful way. Death there is not simpler. It is arguably worse, because it leaves unfinished existence behind and turns restoration into a journey.

Limbo and True Death

This rule also gives stronger meaning to Limbo itself.

Limbo is home.
Limbo is burden.
Limbo is duty.
Limbo is the place where the strange little guardians belong strongly enough that their endings become real there.

That is fitting.

A Creep may vanish into the Astral and become an Echo.
They may be dragged back from non-death and reborn in some impossible outer place.
They may return by miracle, ritual, stubbornness, or group refusal to let the matter stand.

But if they die in Limbo, then Limbo keeps them.

That should matter.

CHAPTER 11: REST & RECOVERY

There are few sights in Limbo more suspicious than a Creep claiming to be "fine."

Sometimes they mean it. More often they mean they are still upright, only limping slightly, have stopped actively leaking on the floor, and would prefer not to discuss the state of their shoulder until after tea, reports, and perhaps a modest emotional collapse in private. Limbo produces this attitude constantly. People here are busy. The Vigil is underfunded in all the traditional ways. The districts do not stop needing protection merely because someone took a claw to the ribs, slept badly after a Dream Passage, or spent the night keeping a pantry from opening into somewhere with weather and teeth.

But rest still matters.

Recovery matters even more.

A good **CREEPS!** campaign should not treat harm as a decorative inconvenience that disappears the moment the next chapter begins. If a fight was dangerous, if a rescue went badly, if a ritual strained body or mind, if a child was saved at the cost of a broken leg, if a Tracker spent the night waist-deep in canal water following a thing that should not have had footprints, then that experience should leave marks. Some of those marks are visible. Some are practical. Some are emotional. Some alter what the Creep can risk next. All of them help make Limbo feel lived in.

This chapter explains how Creeps rest, stabilize, receive treatment, and return to useful function after violence, strain, terror, exhaustion, and threshold work. It also establishes an important practical truth of play:

Rest is not the same thing as healing.

A Creep may be stabilized and still badly hurt. A Creep may be able to walk, talk, grumble, and even return to duty while still carrying an unchanged wound tier. The difference between "not getting worse" and "actually getting better" matters.

In **CREEPS!**, true bodily healing requires **Medicine**. Herbs, poultices, potions, field wraps, salves, bitter tonics, and all the bottled miracles of Limbo are useful—sometimes urgently useful—but they do not replace trained treatment. They buy time. They dull pain. They prevent worsening. They support recovery. They may keep a Creep alive long enough to reach real care. But if the wound itself is to improve—if the body is to move from one Wound Tier to a lower one—someone has to know how to actually treat the damage.

That distinction matters to tone as well as mechanics. It makes medics, stitchers, field healers, and anyone with the **Medicine** skill genuinely valuable. It makes infirmaries, shrine cells, watch posts, and safe rooms feel important. It makes a wounded Creep's decision to keep moving feel more costly and more real.

It also makes recovery scenes better.

A Creep patching gear by lantern-light while a Binder-Kin companion watches from a pipe, a Night Schooler falling asleep over district notes, an Operative refusing to admit they should not carry the crate, an Artificer changing dressings while still sketching a brace design, a Warden drinking bitter broth in a post room while pretending not to hear younger patrol members gossiping about the fight—these are not empty transitions. They are part of the life of the setting. Recovery scenes are where consequences settle, relationships speak, and tomorrow's capacity begins taking shape.

What Recovery Means in CREEPS!

Recovery in **CREEPS!** is built on a simple assumption:

Harm should matter, but it should not freeze the campaign.

That means the game aims for a middle ground between two failures of tone.

The first failure is making wounds meaningless. If a Creep can be badly hurt, go to sleep, wake up untroubled, and continue as if nothing happened, then combat and danger lose much of their shape. Limbo stops feeling dangerous and starts feeling padded.

The second failure is making recovery so slow or punitive that every meaningful fight ruins play for weeks of table time. That kind of realism usually satisfies nobody. It does not deepen the setting; it merely teaches players to avoid scenes the book clearly wants them to engage.

CREEPS! instead treats recovery as structured consequence. A wound changes what a Creep can do. Rest improves position. Care improves it more. Neglect worsens risk. Safe shelter matters. Good Medicine matters. Time matters. The body matters. But the story continues.

Rest and Recovery therefore answer four practical questions:

- How badly is the Creep hurt or strained?
- Are they merely stabilized, or are they actually being treated?
- What kind of recovery are they getting?
- How much time and competent care are available?

Those questions determine how quickly a Creep returns to stable function, and whether that function is temporary endurance or genuine improvement.

The Three States of Recovery

For practical play, recovery scenes usually fall into one of three broad states.

Brief Rest

This is the short pause between active dangers.

A Brief Rest may be ten to thirty minutes behind a barricaded door, a sheltered stop in a lantern post, a pause under watch in a service tunnel, breathing time after a fight while the Engineer checks the frame, or the grim little interval where everyone drinks water, binds what they can, and tries not to discuss what was in the wardrobe.

A Brief Rest is not enough to erase serious harm, but it is often enough to catch breath, stop panic spirals, reorganize gear, receive emergency treatment, regain composure, and prepare for the next immediate scene.

Full Rest

This is a true rest period of meaningful duration, usually overnight or the equivalent in a safe and sheltered place.

A Full Rest requires relative safety, shelter, time to stop moving, and some ability to eat, drink, sleep, or at least lie down in bitter silence without the ceiling becoming a second problem.

A Full Rest is the normal unit for meaningful physical recovery—but not, by itself, a guarantee of wound improvement.

Extended Recovery

This is the period required to come back from serious harm, accumulated strain, prolonged exhaustion, magical backlash, or repeated bad decisions. Extended Recovery may take multiple days and benefits strongly from proper care, decent conditions, and not immediately being sent into another breach event by superiors who "understand the situation perfectly" from the safety of a desk.

This is where wounds stop being tonight's crisis and become tomorrow's logistics.

Wounds and Recovery

CREEPS! tracks bodily harm through Wound Tiers:

- Healthy
- Light Wound
- Medium Wound
- Severe Wound
- Critical Wound

Rest and Recovery determine how those tiers improve over time—but only **Medicine** reduces them.

Healthy

No wound-tier penalties apply. The Creep may still be tired, rattled, damp, annoyed, embarrassed, emotionally scorched, or covered in dust from a falling stairwell, but they are not carrying an active wound tier requiring structured recovery.

Light Wound

A Light Wound is painful but manageable: cuts, bruising, shallow bites, jolted joints, minor burns, or the kind of impact that makes carrying anything heavier than a teapot feel morally offensive.

A Light Wound can be stabilized with simple care or alchemical support. Pain can be reduced. Movement can be improved. The Creep can often continue. But the wound only improves to **Healthy** if it receives actual medical treatment.

Medium Wound

A Medium Wound changes how the Creep lives for a while. This includes deeper cuts, cracked limbs, bad punctures, heavier burns, ugly strain, or injuries that visibly compromise action.

A Medium Wound may be bound, splinted, numbed, supported, or made survivable through herbs, salves, potions, and common field measures. That may be enough to keep the Creep functioning and prevent worsening. But to move from **Medium** to **Light**, the Creep must receive successful **Medicine**.

Severe Wound

A Severe Wound is a genuine crisis in the life of the body. This is where retreat, extraction, immobilization, and focused treatment become urgent.

Examples include major bleeding, badly compromised limb use, deep tearing injury, crushing trauma, intense magical burn or shock, or any harm that leaves the Creep functional only through stubbornness and denial.

A Severe Wound requires immediate stabilization if the Creep is to avoid worsening. But stabilization is not healing. The body may be held together by wrappings, potion support, rigid splinting, and sheer resentment for a time; that still does not make it healthier. Only **Medicine** can move a Severe Wound downward toward recovery.

Critical Wound

A Critical Wound means the Creep is Down: incapacitated, barely conscious, trapped, bleeding out, or otherwise no longer in meaningful control of themselves.

A Critical Wound is not simply "a bigger Severe Wound." It is an emergency condition. Without immediate intervention, the scene's stakes decide what follows.

Possible outcomes include stabilization and survival, capture, collapse and removal from the scene, lasting harm if the Creepmaster is using such consequences, or death if the campaign's tone and stakes permit it.

Critical Wounds must be answered immediately in the fiction.

Stabilizing the Hurt

Before deeper recovery begins, the immediate problem is usually stabilization.

Stabilization means stopping active bleeding, preventing worsening, securing splints, dressings, or support, getting the Creep out of immediate danger, and making sure panic, pain, or magical contamination do not turn "recoverable" into "ruinous."

This is where **Medicine** is ideal—but not alone.

Stabilization may be achieved through:

- **Medicine**
- **Herbalism**
- **Alchemy**
- **Dreamcraft**
- **Sorcery**
- other appropriate methods if the fiction supports them

This is an important distinction:

Stabilization prevents worsening.
Medicine produces healing.

A potion may keep a patient conscious. A salve may numb the pain. A poultice may slow bleeding. A stimulant may get them to shelter. A dream-calming rite may stop shock from turning into full collapse. All of that matters. All of that may save a life. But unless someone successfully treats the actual injury with **Medicine**, the wound tier remains where it is.

Emergency Aid

A successful immediate treatment scene may:

- prevent escalation
- allow safe transport
- reduce panic
- create a better recovery position
- justify that the wound will now remain stable instead of worsening through neglect

Failure on emergency aid does not need to mean instant catastrophe every time, but it should usually cost something:

- more pain
- slower recovery
- added risk
- worsened movement
- a Clock tick
- exposure of the whole group to continued danger while treatment drags on

Medicine and Actual Healing

Herbs, salves, alchemical brews, dream-calming infusions, antiseptic smoke, fungal binders, pain-dulling paste, and even magical support may all assist recovery—but they do not themselves reduce the wound tier unless the Creepmaster is explicitly running a campaign in which magical healing is being treated as true medicine. In standard **CREEPS!** play, the body still requires skilled treatment.

This means:

- A Light Wound remains a Light Wound until Medicine reduces it.
- A Medium Wound remains a Medium Wound until Medicine reduces it.
- A Severe Wound remains a Severe Wound until Medicine reduces it.
- Full Rest without Medicine may restore function, remove fatigue, and improve comfort, but not the wound tier itself.

This rule gives Medicine real weight in play. It means medics matter. It means triage matters. It means a district infirmary, capable patrol healer, or well-run shrine recovery cell changes the practical shape of a campaign.

Full Rest and Wound Improvement

A Full Rest is the standard unit of recovery, but it only reduces wounds if successful **Medicine** is part of that recovery period.

Light Wounds

After **1 Full Rest**, a Light Wound may improve to **Healthy** if:

- the Creep received successful Medicine
- the conditions were at least decent
- the injury was not immediately aggravated again

Without Medicine, the Creep may still rest, regain composure, reduce pain, and function more comfortably—but the wound remains **Light**.

Medium Wounds

After **1 Full Rest**, a Medium Wound may improve to **Light** if:

- the Creep received successful Medicine
- the conditions were reasonably safe
- the injury was not repeatedly worsened

Without Medicine, a Medium Wound remains **Medium**, though alchemical and herbal support may justify better functioning within that unchanged tier.

Severe Wounds

After **1 Full Rest**, a Severe Wound usually remains **Severe** unless it received strong treatment and good recovery conditions. With competent Medicine and real rest, a Severe Wound may improve to **Medium**, but this should not be automatic.

Severe harm should feel serious.

Without Medicine, a Severe Wound may be stabilized, kept from worsening, and made barely manageable through support measures—but it remains Severe.

Critical Wounds

Critical Wounds do not resolve through ordinary rest alone. The Creep must first survive, stabilize, and be brought into a state where recovery is even possible. Once stabilized and no longer at immediate scene risk, a surviving Critical Wound may enter **Severe-Wound recovery**—but again, only **Medicine** reduces that tier.

Treatment and Recovery Tests

The Creepmaster does not need to call for recovery rolls constantly. But when the quality of care matters, a treatment test helps define how well recovery proceeds.

The usual skill is **Medicine**.

Depending on the exact case, support or alternative tests may involve:

- **Herbalism**
- **Alchemy**
- **Scholar**
- **Lore: Arcane**
- **Dreamcraft**
- **Sorcery**

- **Investigation**, in the unpleasant but sometimes necessary sense of figuring out what the injury actually is

But these supporting tests do one of two things:

- help stabilize
- improve the conditions under which **Medicine** will work

They do not replace Medicine for actual wound-tier reduction.

Treatment Timing

A Medicine test may be called for:

- immediately after battle
- at the start of a Full Rest
- during an extended recovery period
- when a wound is strange, magical, dream-fed, or contaminated
- when resources are poor and skill must make up the difference
- when the difference between stable and healing is uncertain

Treatment Results

Use the normal resolution rules.

A strong success on Medicine may:

- reduce the wound tier efficiently
- allow one tier of recovery faster than the base situation would normally support
- reduce pain or secondary strain
- remove a complicating condition
- restore the patient to usable function sooner

A narrow success may:

- provide ordinary expected healing for the recovery period
- reduce the wound tier normally
- keep the injury from creating further complications

A failure may:

- leave the wound tier unchanged
- slow recovery
- worsen pain or inconvenience
- create a small complication
- in serious cases, risk renewed instability if circumstances are poor

A Lesser Win is excellent for recovery scenes in **CREEPS!**:

- the wound improves, but supplies are exhausted
- the patient heals, but must remain immobile longer
- the body stabilizes well enough, but someone else now loses sleep keeping watch
- the injury drops a tier, but the treatment is ugly, painful, and leaves the patient miserable for the rest of the day

That is exactly the kind of costly forward motion the setting likes.

What Herbs, Potions, and Alchemy Actually Do

Herbs, poultices, salves, stimulant draughts, soporific brews, anti-fever tinctures, blood-staunching paste, and all the alchemical ugliness between are still important. Extremely important.

They can:

- stop bleeding
- prevent worsening
- stabilize a dying patient
- reduce pain
- grant temporary function
- control fever or shock
- help a patient sleep

- improve Medicine tests
- justify survival in bad conditions
- remove or reduce secondary complications

In other words, they are not weaker than Medicine. They are doing different work.

A Creep patched with salves and stimulants may stay on their feet. A Creep numbed properly may continue through a desperate scene. A Creep dosed with the right brew may survive transport, avoid infection, or stop shaking long enough for real care.

But bodily healing is still Medicine.

That distinction makes alchemy and herbal practice tactically valuable without letting every stocked satchel replace an actual healer.

Shelter, Beds, and Bad Places to Heal

Where a Creep rests matters.

A Light Wound treated in a proper district room with dry blankets, hot broth, and a medic nearby is not the same as a Light Wound "rested" in a flooded service tunnel while everyone takes turns holding the lantern and pretending the scratching in the wall is normal.

The Creepmaster should judge recovery conditions honestly.

Good Recovery Conditions

Examples include a district infirmary, safe Vigil post, genuinely secure home, sheltered workroom with help, or any calm room with a proper bed, clean wraps, clean water, and food.

Good conditions may justify:

- easier Medicine tests
- easier stabilization
- fewer complications
- full benefit from rest
- safer recovery from magical or dream-linked strain

Poor Recovery Conditions

Examples include damp tunnels, roadside camps, active danger zones, overcrowded posts, dirty improvised shelter, interrupted sleep, environments near unstable portals, or public panic scenes where nobody gets to be left alone long enough to heal properly.

Poor conditions may justify:

- Disadvantage on Medicine
- slower stabilization
- wound tiers remaining unchanged even after time passes
- new complications
- fatigue persisting alongside wounds

The body notices where it is healing, even if the Creep insists on being professional about it.

Exhaustion, Strain, and Running on Bad Decisions

Not all recovery problems come from direct wounds.

Creeps also suffer from:

- exhaustion
- cold exposure
- lack of sleep
- emotional overstrain
- repeated Alert response
- prolonged magical pressure
- threshold work under duress
- too many nights of "just one more report and then I will rest"

These may not always be tracked as wound tiers, but they should still matter.

The Creepmaster may represent them through:

- temporary Disadvantage
- a recovery-based Clock

- penalties to concentration, social poise, or field action
- refusal to allow full benefit from rest unless the strain is actually addressed

A Full Rest can usually clear ordinary fatigue. Prolonged strain may require multiple safe rests, warm food, social decompression, actual sleep, and the deeply neglected tactical discipline known as stopping.

Dream-Strain and Portal Recovery

Limbo is not a setting where all harm is bodily.

Some scenes leave dream-pressure, symbolic contamination, emotional echo, or threshold residue clinging to a Creep even after the bleeding stops. A character may be physically upright and still clearly not fit to return to work without rest.

This is especially true after:

- failed Quiet the Realm scenes
- Dream Passage exposure
- backlash during Dreamcraft or Sorcery
- prolonged proximity to nightmare manifestations
- emotionally corrosive threshold events
- contact with things that are less "monster" and more "bad idea given motives"

Dream-strain may require safe sleep, Dreamcraft-based calming, ritual grounding, companionship, symbolic cleansing, a room that is not actively wrong, and time away from threshold pressure.

The Creepmaster may model dream-strain as:

- temporary Disadvantage
- a short-term narrative condition
- a penalty tied to fear, sleep, or concentration
- a Clock that must be Quieted or soothed down rather than "healed"

This is still recovery. It is simply recovery for the parts of a Creep the body does not entirely explain.

What Brief Rest Can Do

A Brief Rest is not enough to remove real wounds, but it is still useful.

A Brief Rest may allow:

- catching breath after a chase or fight
- calming panic
- reorganizing gear
- taking emergency treatment
- restoring clarity after immediate chaos
- reducing scene pressure
- preventing emotional spiral
- preparing for the next exchange with less obvious shivering

The Creepmaster may also allow a Brief Rest to remove:

- a minor temporary penalty from fear or disorientation
- a small narrative condition
- the worst of a recent stumble, shock, or panic spike

But a Brief Rest should not usually remove wound tiers. It is for immediate recovery of function, not full healing.

Companions and Recovery

Recovery scenes are one of the best places to show what a bonded companion, familiar creature, or patrol partner means in play.

A companion may help by standing watch while the Creep sleeps, fetching supplies, calming the wounded, warning of danger before rest is interrupted, assisting with symbolic grounding, or simply refusing to leave, which is sometimes emotionally useful even when medically unhelpful.

A Binder-Kin's companion in particular may be woven into recovery narration constantly. A Glowrat curled against a fever-warm sleeve, a Pebble Golem standing mute watch by the bedroll, a Tiny Owl-Beast refusing to stop blinking at the window, a Pocket Dragon sleeping under the blankets like a suspiciously warm paperweight—these things matter. They do not replace Medicine, but they absolutely help make recovery scenes feel like part of **CREEPS!** instead of generic downtime.

Returning to Duty

One of the most important questions in this chapter is not "has the Creep fully healed?"

It is:

Are they fit to return to duty?

Those are not always the same thing.

In the Vigil, many Creeps go back to work before comfort has returned. That is part of the setting. Districts still need protection. Routes still need watching. Reports still need writing. Children still vanish through cupboards with the deeply inconsiderate timing common to all emergencies.

A Creep may return to duty:

- at Light Wound
- at Medium Wound if desperate and badly advised
- while emotionally strained
- after incomplete magical restabilization
- with clear penalties still active

The system allows that. The consequences should remain visible.

A Creep who returns too early is not "breaking the rules." They are making a very **CREEPS!** kind of decision. The Creepmaster should let that decision matter.

Creepmaster Guidance: Keep Recovery Lived-In

Recovery scenes should not drag, but they also should not vanish.

A good Rest & Recovery chapter in **CREEPS!** supports consequence, character, pacing, tone, and social texture.

When deciding how much table time to give recovery, ask:

- Did this injury matter emotionally?
- Did the scene change a relationship?
- Does the group need a breath?
- Is this a chance to show district life?
- Is there something to learn, confess, repair, or quietly regret here?
- Will skipping this weaken the campaign's sense of cost?

Sometimes the answer will be "summarize the night and move on."

Sometimes the answer will be "no, this deserves a room, a bandage scene, an argument, a companion keeping watch, and a confession nobody intended to make."

Use both.

Quick Recovery Summary

Brief Rest

Useful for breath, composure, emergency aid, and minor scene recovery.
Does not normally remove wound tiers.

Full Rest

The standard unit of real recovery.
Provides time, safety, and the opportunity for proper treatment.
By itself, it does not reduce wound tiers.

Actual Healing

Only successful **Medicine** reduces Wound Tiers.

Typical results with successful Medicine and proper rest:

- **Light Wound** → **Healthy**
- **Medium Wound** → **Light**
- **Severe Wound** → **Medium**, with strong care and good conditions
- **Critical Wound** must first be stabilized before entering ordinary recovery

Herbs, Potions, and Alchemy

These matter enormously. They can:

- stabilize
- prevent worsening
- reduce pain
- support rest
- improve treatment conditions
- keep a Creep functional long enough to survive

But they do not by themselves reduce Wound Tiers.

Bad Conditions Hurt Recovery

Poor shelter, interrupted sleep, magical contamination, dream pressure, and continued strain may:

- delay improvement
- impose Disadvantage on Medicine
- preserve complications
- make even light injuries linger

CHAPTER 12: ADVANCEMENT & GROWTH

A Creep survives by learning fast, adapting badly, and somehow staying alive long enough to call the result experience.

In **CREEPS!**, advancement is meant to reflect that kind of growth. It should reward hard choices, dangerous survival, earned skill, deepening bonds, and the slow shaping of a Protagonist by Limbo's roads, trades, wounds, wonders, and recurring bad decisions. It should not turn the game into a ladder of ever-inflating numbers that quietly drains danger out of the setting. The world should remain sharp. Growth should help the Protagonist meet that sharpness, not blunt it. As in the core **One-on-One RPG**, improvement is intentionally simple, modular, and easy for the Creepmaster to run without turning every session break into an accounting ritual. Tests are still made on **d100**. Advantages and Disadvantages still matter. **DoS** and **DoF** still measure quality when needed. **Destiny** remains the Protagonist's ability to push fate at the moments that matter most. Growth does not replace those mechanics. It builds on them.

There are two broad kinds of growth in play. The first is **permanent growth**, which changes the character sheet over time: better skills, stronger attributes, access to Specialist fields, and a greater capacity for Destiny. This is the lasting shape of what the Protagonist becomes. The second is **spotlight growth**, represented by Destiny itself. Destiny is not permanent raw power. It is narrative leverage, the ability to say, in effect, *this moment matters, and I am not letting it pass quietly.* The two work together. Permanent growth keeps the Protagonist developing. Destiny keeps the story dangerous without becoming hopeless. In a setting like **CREEPS!**, that balance matters. A Protagonist should still fear dark tunnels, bad doors, and ugly odds. They should simply become better at surviving them.

The currency of advancement is the **Growth Point**, or **GP**. Growth Points represent lessons, scars, technique, reputation, emotional change, hardened instinct, and all the practical adaptation that comes from continued survival in a world like Limbo. A Creep does not grow because a number on a chart says so. They grow because they have crossed dangerous routes, paid costs, deepened bonds, taken risks, and lived to carry the experience forward. Growth Points are usually awarded by the Creepmaster at the end of a session, chapter, mission, or major stretch of play, then spent between sessions or at a safe resting point. The exact award method may vary by campaign style, but the structure remains the same. A simple milestone method is usually best: **2 GP** for light progress, **3 GP** for strong progress and meaningful risk, and **4 GP** for major turning points, hard victories, or emotionally significant sessions. More objective-based or beat-based methods also work, provided the

Creepmaster chooses one approach and sticks with it. Consistency matters more than cleverness here.

Growth Points may be spent in four main ways in **CREEPS!**: to improve **Skills**, improve **Attributes**, gain **Specialist Access**, or increase **Destiny Capacity**. Skills are the most common and natural purchase. They reflect practice, repetition, lived experience, training, and hard use. A character may increase a skill by **+5** for **1 GP**, or by **+10** for **2 GP**. As in the core game, the Creepmaster is encouraged to treat very high skills more carefully. Once a skill reaches **75 or higher**, each further **+5** should usually cost **2 GP** instead of **1**, reflecting the fact that true mastery comes more slowly than basic competence. In most campaigns, skills should not rise beyond **95** without special story justification. That keeps expertise meaningful without making failure extinct. It is also strongly recommended that a skill increase follow the fiction: the Protagonist should either have used the skill meaningfully in recent play or had access to training, study, or mentoring. This should be treated as an opportunity for story, not as a bureaucratic barrier.

Attributes change more slowly. They represent deeper transformation: hardening endurance, broadened awareness, sharpened intellect, greater personal force, and all the heavier adaptations that do not come from a single good afternoon with a knife or a notebook. An Attribute increases by **+5** for **3 GP**. In most grounded **CREEPS!** play, Attributes should usually remain below the **80–85** range unless the campaign is deliberately moving toward a higher-power tone. As with skills, the fiction should support the increase. A Creep's **Endurance** may rise after prolonged hardship and survival. **Presence** may rise after leadership, responsibility, or being forced to become the sort of little horror other people actually listen to. **Awareness** may sharpen after repeated close calls. **Intellect** may improve after study, problem-solving, and long exposure to the realm's stranger systems. The point is not to demand permission; the point is to keep character growth feeling like the result of play rather than a detached purchase menu.

Specialist Access remains one of the system's most important distinctions, and it should be handled the same way here. If a skill is marked **[Specialist]**, a character without access may only attempt it at the Creepmaster's discretion, often with Disadvantage or harsher consequences. A character with access may use it normally. In **CREEPS!**, this matters especially for fields such as sorcerous study, advanced alchemy, certain ritual practices, specialist technical work, and other areas where "anyone can try" is not the same as "anyone can reasonably perform." Gaining access to one Specialist skill costs **2 GP**. This is one of the cleanest ways to show a Creep broadening into new areas of competence without pretending every difficult discipline is equally available to everyone by default.

Destiny Capacity may also be improved, but slowly. Destiny is powerful, flexible, and central to the emotional rhythm of **One-on-One RPG** play. In **CREEPS!**, it should remain precious. Increasing maximum Destiny by **+1** costs **3 GP**. This should feel meaningful. A larger Destiny pool does not make the Protagonist invincible. It means they have grown into a figure the story is more willing to bend around when the moment truly demands it. That kind of increase should come with weight.

Companions should grow as well, but never in a way that steals the camera from the Protagonist. Their role remains support, leverage, emotional weight, and tactical texture. The cleanest method is **Echo Growth**: for every **4 GP** the Protagonist spends, the Companion gains one parallel improvement, such as **+5** to a key

rating, a new simple trait, or a suitable gear upgrade. The Creepmaster may also tie Companion advancement to bond milestones instead—shared survival, confession, forgiveness, vow, or other relationship changes that matter in play. In either case, Companion growth should feel relational, not mechanical for its own sake. A Companion becomes more important because the duo has changed together, not because the game forgot whose story this is.

As a rule, upgrades should be applied **between sessions**, during downtime, or at a secure resting point. Mid-session improvement should be rare and only allowed when the fiction supports it—at camp, in a safe room, in a warded hideout, after a long breath and a real pause. A chase is not the moment to remember advanced bookkeeping and become better at knives by administrative miracle. Limbo may allow many strange things. It should not encourage that one.

In practical terms, advancement in **CREEPS!** should feel like survival becoming style. The Protagonist learns, hardens, adapts, and grows more capable without ever becoming too comfortable. That is the right shape for the setting. A seasoned Creep should be more dangerous than a fresh one, but never so comfortable that the dark stops mattering.

CHAPTER 13: ARSENAL & ARMORY

Limbo is dangerous enough to require weapons even if it were nothing more than a dead realm of fog, ruins, and bad roads. But Limbo is not merely a wasteland haunted by dream residue and old wrongness. It is a nexus. Worlds touch there. Portal routes converge there. Astral pathways pass through it like trade roads through a hard-used frontier city. Because of that, Limbo is not only a place of peril. It is also a place of traffic.

That traffic changes everything.

A realm linked to many worlds does not remain isolated for long. It becomes a meeting ground, and once it becomes a meeting ground, it becomes a market. Travelers arrive with intent, cargo, desperation, or all three. Some come as merchants. Some come as pilgrims. Some come as smugglers, brokers, scavengers, fugitives, scholars, mercenaries, artificers, and fools. They bring tools, luxuries, raw materials, local specialties, sacred trash, dangerous curiosities, and practical necessities from far beyond Limbo's own native roads. They also carry home whatever Limbo produces in abundance: threshold lore, salvage, dream-touched goods, alchemical reagents, guarded relics, fungus craft, route knowledge, and all the strange practical wares that only a nexus world can supply.

That is why Limbo's markets matter so much to the setting. They are not decoration. They are one of the ways the realm lives.

In a poorer setting, an equipment chapter can afford to assume a single culture, a single economy, and a single broad material tradition. **CREEPS!** cannot. The Arsenal & Armory chapter belongs to a world where a blade may be forged in one reality, repaired in another, and sold in Limbo to a buyer from somewhere else entirely. A lantern may contain local fungus-gel, imported crystalwork, and brass fittings stamped with marks no one nearby can read. A coat may be cut for marsh weather but lined with cloth traded in from a dry industrial realm where people have never heard of dream-thin fog and would be happier if they kept it that way.

This intermingling is not incidental. It is one of the defining conditions of life in Limbo.

The realm's position as an interdimensional trade hub is also one of the chief reasons the **Vigil** exists in its present form. The Vigil are not simply wardens of monsters and patrol-keepers of bad roads, though they are certainly that. They are also protectors of civic order in a place where order must stretch across many peoples, many legal traditions, and many ways of misunderstanding one another. A nexus world cannot function for long without regulation. Someone must keep the routes open. Someone must monitor

sanctioned crossings. Someone must inspect dangerous cargo, enforce recognized trade law, suppress predatory portal activity, and intervene when the customs of one world become a threat to everyone sharing the district.

That burden falls, however imperfectly, to the Vigil.

They guard roads, crossings, and market corridors. They regulate certain categories of sorcerous practice, especially where public safety is concerned. They monitor licensed exchange in larger settlements and maintain authority over sensitive goods, restricted travel, and dangerous thresholds. They are quartermasters, magistrates, patrol commanders, inspectors, escorts, and enforcers according to circumstance. Without them, Limbo would still have commerce, but it would be uglier, bloodier, and far less stable. Trade can survive danger. It rarely survives chaos for long.

Because Limbo sits between worlds, its economy requires a common medium of exchange. Home coinage still arrives from elsewhere, of course. Every busy district sees foreign mints, stamped discs, prayer-marked trade tokens, guild bars, carved scrip, and stranger forms of money besides. Yet such currencies are not reliable enough on their own to support a realm where buyers and sellers may come from ten different traditions before noon. Limbo therefore uses a common trade currency recognized across most settled routes and market districts: **Pebbles**.

Pebbles are small, smooth stones marked not by sovereign faces or dynastic seals, but by color, enchantment, and accepted custom. They are simple enough to handle, difficult enough to counterfeit credibly, and neutral enough to survive a realm of interdimensional traffic. Their value rests not in ornament, but in trust, regulation, and habit. The trade wards know them. The brokers know them. The Vigil know them. That is enough.

The most common unit is the **Grey Pebble**, worth **1 Pebble**, usually written **1 P**. In practical comparison, one Grey Pebble is worth roughly what many peoples would think of as a **copper coin**. It is the unit of ordinary purchase: a small meal, a patch kit, cheap lodging, lamp fuel, or a modest practical tool.

Above that sits the **Blue Pebble**, worth **10 P**. A Blue Pebble carries a faint arcane charge and serves as the more useful coin of routine trade. In broad comparison, it is worth approximately what many races would consider a **silver coin**. Blue Pebbles move constantly through weapon stalls, craft counters, outfitter tables, and working inns.

The next denomination is the **Green Pebble**, worth **50 P**. These are common in the hands of craftsmen, quartermasters, serious traders, and travelers making purchases too large for a purse full of Blues but too ordinary to require true high-value exchange. Above that stands the **Gold Pebble**, worth **250 P**, a rarer and more formal unit seen more often in institutional payment, licensed contracts, major procurement, and Vigil-side accounting. At the highest ordinary tier is the **Star Pebble**, worth **1250 P**, infused with Astral force and usually reserved for major artificer commissions, high ritual costs, rare goods, dangerous route fees, and transactions large enough that lower stones would be impractical.

The exchange ladder is simple once learned:

- **10 Grey Pebbles** = **1 Blue Pebble**
- **5 Blue Pebbles** = **1 Green Pebble**
- **5 Green Pebbles** = **1 Gold Pebble**
- **5 Gold Pebbles** = **1 Star Pebble**

For most characters, Grey, Blue, and Green Pebbles will matter most in ordinary play. Gold and Star Pebbles belong more often to major purchases, protected services, formal contracts, and the sort of wealth that changes how other people look at the hand holding it.

The following broad prices are typical across much of settled Limbo, though any sensible Creepmaster will adjust them for route danger, district wealth, scarcity, legality, and urgency:

- **Common tools**: 3–8 P
- **Weapons**: 10–40 P
- **Armor**: 15–60 P
- **Potions and alchemical preparations**: 10–50 P
- **Lodging**: 1–3 P
- **Portal services**: 5–200 P
- **Artificer crafts**: 20–100+ P

These values give Limbo's economy its working shape. Basic survival gear is attainable. Better gear is meaningful. Rare, licensed, or highly specialized goods remain expensive enough to matter. That is the right balance for the setting. A Creep should be able to buy rope, chalk, a rough blade, or a patched travel coat without petitioning nobility. They should not casually acquire elite armor, high artificery, or premium portal access without feeling the cost.

Foreign visitors are not cut off from this system. Non-Limbo coins can be exchanged into Pebbles at a **1-for-1 practical rate**, with a modest **service fee per 50 coins or pebbles exchanged**. Established brokers, exchange houses, and larger market wards handle this routinely. The convenience is vital. Without it, every interdimensional arrival would become an accounting dispute before becoming anything more interesting. The fee keeps the service profitable. The parity keeps the roads usable.

As a result, Limbo's markets have a distinct character. They are neither wholly local nor wholly foreign. They are layered. A buyer may shop in one district and hear five accents, see three styles of armor, and choose between tools made for climates they have never visited. A seller may price a blade in Pebbles while privately remembering what it once cost in another world's silver. A Vigil officer may inspect a caravan whose goods were lawful where they were packed, questionable where they crossed, and restricted where they are now being unloaded. This is ordinary life in a nexus realm. Trade is not background noise. It is part of the architecture.

That architecture shapes the Arsenal & Armory chapter from the ground up.

Weapons in **CREEPS!** are not abstract damage entries detached from culture. They are things made, traded, repaired, carried, and judged. Armor is not merely a defensive number. It is cost, weight, status, practicality, and maintenance. Tools matter because survival in Limbo depends as much on ordinary preparedness as it does on force. A rope, a hooded lamp, a pry tool, a sealable jar, a chalk roll, a field knife, a bedroll, a fungus-filter, or a proper set of spikes may save a life more often than a grander item. Artificer goods matter because this is a world where practical magic becomes trade stock. Portal gear matters because travel is an economy unto itself.

All of this is why the chapter is called **Arsenal & Armory** rather than simply Weapons. Limbo equips people for more than combat. It equips them for travel, bargaining, work, salvage, survival, ritual, and bad decisions undertaken with at least some preparation. The chapter that follows should be read in that spirit. It is not merely a catalogue of things. It is the material face of a realm built on crossings.

A knife in Limbo may be a tool, a weapon, a trade good, a keepsake, a legal concern, or all four. A lantern may be gear, safety, status, and a declaration that the bearer expects darkness to become active. A suit of armor may mark profession, allegiance, and how much fear the owner has learned to take seriously. A handful of Pebbles may mean a warm bed, a new blade, a crossing fee, a bribe, or the difference between legal passage and an improvised night in the wrong district.

That is the spirit in which this equipment should be understood.

Limbo is a crossroads. Crossroads breed markets. Markets breed tools. Tools breed survival.

And in a place where survival is rarely given freely, what you carry is never a trivial question.

Weapons of Limbo

Creeps rarely favor oversized battlefield arms or decorative weapons made to impress nobles, parade marshals, or people who do not expect to crawl through wet tunnels in the dark. Limbo rewards practicality. A weapon must be light enough to carry, durable enough to survive hard handling, and useful enough to justify its cost when everything from bad footing to worse company is trying to shorten the day. As a result, many weapons found in Limbo are compact, clever, improvised, multipurpose, or adapted from tools of labor, salvage, mining, and patrol work. Some are local designs born of narrow tunnels and ruin fighting. Others arrive through trade from foreign cultures and are altered to suit Limbo's harsher practical demands.

Melee Weapons

Claws
Damage: 1d4
Cost: —
Natural weaponry is common among Creeps of certain Kin and among stranger beings drawn from other worlds. Claws vary wildly in appearance—soft hooked talons, blunt digging hands, sharp bark-thorns, chitin hooks, or elegant little horror-fingers—but all serve the same practical role. They are always present, impossible to forget at home, and difficult to confiscate politely.

Tail
Damage: 1d6
Cost: —
A heavy, barbed, clubbed, or whip-like tail can serve as natural weaponry in its own right. Some Creeps strike with bone-weighted tails, others with scaled lashers or thick balancing limbs made dangerous through force and practice. Tail attacks are especially common among extradimensional travelers and stranger non-Creep peoples who have settled into Limbo's trade wards.

Creep-Sword
Damage: 1d6
Cost: 5 P
The standard sidearm of many Vigil personnel and freelance road-guards, the Creep-Sword is a short practical blade built for narrow corridors and quick fighting rather than grand dueling form. Most have broad working edges, sturdy grips, and plain iron fittings. A good Creep-Sword looks like something made to survive years of rough use, sharpening, and neglect without ever becoming ornamental.

Tunnel Mace
Damage: 1d6+1
Cost: 6 P
Favored by wardens, toll enforcers, and anyone who distrusts blades around heavy clothing or shell armor, the Tunnel Mace is a compact crushing weapon with a stone or iron head mounted on a short haft. It is brutally effective in cramped fighting and well suited to striking through awkward angles, low ceilings, and shield edges.

Spadeblade
Damage: 1d4
Cost: 3 P
Half shovel and half weapon, the Spadeblade is a favorite of scavengers, gravediggers, marsh-workers, and practical-minded travelers who like their gear to earn its keep twice. Its broad sharpened edge is serviceable in combat, but its true value lies in digging, prying, and desperate field labor.

Thorn Dagger
Damage: 1d3+1
Cost: 2 P
This light dagger is grown, carved, or fabricated with tiny backward thorn ridges along part of the blade. Many are made from hard plant growth, resin-bonded

bone, or lacquered root-wood rather than metal. They are favored by smugglers, vine-folk traders, and Creeps who like ugly little weapons that disappear into a sleeve.

Pick-Hammer
Damage: 1d6
Cost: 5 P
Originally a miner's tool, the Pick-Hammer has long since become a standard Limbo sidearm for tunnel-fighters, stonecutters, and ruin-looters. One face strikes bluntly, the other bites and hooks. It is particularly respected in places where shell, stone, and broken masonry matter as much as flesh.

Pebble Club
Damage: 1d6
Cost: 1 P
Simple, ugly, and perfectly reliable, the Pebble Club is often made from knotted root, scrap timber, or packed stone-weighted wood. It is the sort of weapon every settlement can produce and every desperate creature understands immediately.

Tunnel Hook
Damage: 1d4
Cost: 4 P
Built with a climbing hook profile and reinforced shaft, the Tunnel Hook serves as both weapon and practical tool. It can catch ledges, drag loose objects, snag limbs, or help with rough ascent. Travelers who live by ruin-entry or shaft work often prefer it for exactly that reason.

Fang Knife
Damage: 1d4
Cost: 3 P
A light fighting and utility knife, usually fashioned from carved bone, shell, tooth, horn, or imported odd material. Fang Knives are common among marsh traders, beast handlers, and cultures that place value on practical trophies from local predators.

Chisel-Axe
Damage: 1d8
Cost: 6 P
A brutal little hybrid tool-weapon with a split profile between a wedge and an axe-head. The Chisel-Axe is often seen among artificer caravans, salvage breakers, and heavy labor crews who need something that can cut, split, and kill without asking which job comes first.

Stone Shard Blade
Damage: 1d4+2
Cost: 1 P
A cheap blade made from carefully fractured stone, glass-like cavern crystal, or similar brittle material. It is viciously sharp but never trusted for elegance. Many are emergency weapons, gang tools, or poor district improvisations sold in bunches by people who prefer not to answer questions.

Goblin Hookblade
Damage: 1d4+1

Cost: 6 P
A vicious curved knife-sabre hybrid built for snagging straps, wrists, sleeves, and pride. Popular among goblinoid outriders and anyone with a practical understanding of unfairness.

Orc Iron-Cleaver
Damage: 1d8
Cost: 12 P
A broad, brutal hand weapon halfway between a short falchion and a butcher's conviction. Heavy, direct, and respected by fighters who solve problems in one statement.

Fae Briar Rapier
Damage: 1d6
Cost: 18 P
A slim elegant thrusting blade etched or grown with thorn motifs. Beautiful, quick, and almost insulting in the hands of someone who knows what they are doing.

Ashen Bar Mace
Damage: 1d6+2
Cost: 10 P
An imported volcanic-forge cudgel with dense dark metal ribs. Favored in industrial realms and among Limbo enforcers who admire ugly efficiency.

Glass Fang Dirk
Damage: 1d4+2
Cost: 8 P
Made from impossible translucent material and sold by traders from crystalline or dream-polished realms. Extremely sharp, alarmingly pretty, and not wholly trustworthy on a hard parry.

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Infernal Contract Blade — Damage: 1d6 | Cost: 18 P
A slim black-red sidearm forged from heat-dark metal and etched with tiny legal script that only becomes readable when blooded or held over flame. These blades are popular among infernal envoys, debt collectors, and theatrical killers with a taste for intimidation. The edge holds beautifully, the balance is excellent, and every sensible buyer asks at least once whether the weapon came with terms attached.
Notes: Grants **+10 on intimidation-focused Presence tests** when brandished in a formal confrontation.

Drake-Tooth Sabre — Damage: 1d6+2 | Cost: 25 P
Made from scaled steel and fitted with a grip wrapped in cured drakehide, this curved sabre is modeled after the cutting profile of a young dragon's fang. It is sharp, elegant, and favored by draconic caravan guards

and collectors who like their weapons to look slightly superior to everyone else in the room.
Notes: Especially prized in high-status markets; often sold with scabbards too nice for their owners.

Gnoll Bone-Crook — Damage: 1d6 | Cost: 5 P
A rough, hook-backed striking staff built from scavenged bone, horn, and reinforced hide wrapping. Gnoll traders and raiders alike favor weapons that can strike, drag, and pull prey or loot closer. It looks ugly because it is ugly.
Notes: Gain **+10 on tests to hook, drag, or yank loose objects or off-balance foes** where the fiction supports it.

Ogre Cleave-Bar — Damage: 1d8 | Cost: 10 P
Originally made for large-handed brutes from ogre-haunted trade fringes, this heavy iron bar-blade is brutal, simple, and distressingly effective in close quarters. Most Creeps use it two-handed or adapt it locally with shortened grips.
Notes: Crude appearance, excellent for smashing weak barriers or splintered doors.

Giant Step-Hammer — Damage: 1d8+1 | Cost: 20 P
A reduced traveling version of the great forge-hammers used by giant craft houses, still absurdly heavy by ordinary standards but manageable in Creep-scale variants produced for trade. Its square striking face and reinforced haft make it as useful for labor as for combat.
Notes: Gain **+10 on tests to break stone, pegs, doors, or heavy fittings**.

Dwarven Tunnel Axe — Damage: 1d6+1 | Cost: 9 P
A thick-headed practical axe built for tunnel fighting, close labor, and the sort of disciplined violence dwarven road-clans consider basic professionalism. The edge is plain, stout, and difficult to ruin.
Notes: Favored by disciplined guards, engineers, and travelers who distrust decorative metalwork.

Ranged Weapons

Pebble-Sling
Damage: 1d4
Range: 30 ft
Cost: 2 P
A humble sling remains one of the most practical ranged weapons in Limbo. Ammunition is easy to find, the weapon is quiet, and it travels well. Some foreign traders dismiss it until struck with one in a tunnel, after which they often grow more respectful.

Spark Wand
Damage: 1d4+1 lightning
Range: 20 ft
Cost: 10 P
A small artificer-made rod using battery shards or charged sparkstones to loose a short electrical discharge. Spark Wands are not elegant military issue in most districts; they are purchased tools of enforcers, licensed guards, artificer houses, and buyers with enough Pebbles to prefer a clean shock over a thrown stone.

Throw-Needles
Damage: 1d3
Range: 10 ft
Cost: 1 P
Usually sold in counts of three, these tiny weighted needles are easy to hide and easy to poison. Different cultures bring different styles into Limbo: lacquer-black reed steel, bone slivers, crystal pins, fish-spine darts, and stranger variants besides.

Dartstick
Damage: 1d3+1
Range: 20 ft
Cost: 3 P
A simple tube-blow weapon used for light darts, irritant thorns, or tiny venom shafts. Popular in marsh districts, fungal courts, and among small-bodied travelers who value concealment over spectacle.

Crankbow
Damage: 1d6
Range: 40 ft
Cost: 8 P
A compact crossbow variant using a hand-crank or ratcheting draw system. Slower to reload than a sling or dartstick, but stronger and more consistent. Crankbows are a favorite among gate guards, private caravan escorts, and cautious people with patience.**Pocket-Bomb**
Damage: 0 direct damage
Range: 10 ft
Cost: 5 P
A tiny explosive noisemaker built more for disruption than killing. It creates a sharp blast, bright spark, and sudden morale shock. Particularly useful for startling beasts, breaking pursuit rhythm, or causing one excellent moment of panic.**Kobold Ember-Spitter — Damage: 1d4 | Range: 15 ft | Cost: 9 P**
A tiny hand-tube projector that spits a short burst of powdered ignition and spark. Kobold makers adore

devices that are equal parts trap, weapon, and engineering joke. This one is all three.
Notes: Useful for lighting fires, fuses, or tempers.**Gnome Coilbow — Damage: 1d6 | Range: 35 ft | Cost: 14 P**
A compact spring-assisted bow mechanism built with absurd care and several tiny internal pieces no one enjoys repairing. Gnome-made missile weapons tend to value precision over brute force, and the Coilbow is no exception.
Notes: Grants **+10 on one carefully aimed ranged attack per scene**, at Creepmaster discretion.

Special Weapons and Oddities

Glowbomb
Cost: 3 P
A thrown light-burst that floods a 10-foot radius with sudden brightness. Popular in dark caverns, ruin entries, and anti-ambush work. Smugglers hate them. Patrols love them.

Jolt Rod
Damage: 1d6 lightning
Cost: 12 P
A short melee rod fitted with sparkstone or charge channels. On impact it delivers a violent electrical bite. Often imported in parts and assembled locally by licensed makers or disreputable craftsmen with steady hands.

Sporeburst Orb
Damage: 1d4 poison
Cost: 6 P
A glass or fungus-shell orb filled with irritant spores, usually harmless to most local Creeps but deeply unpleasant to others. Favored in fungal districts, marsh trade alleys, and by people who do not care for fair warning.

Shadow Net
Damage: —
Cost: 6 P
A restraining net woven from dark fiber, dyed reed cord, or imported shade-thread. Some are merely black and dramatic. Better ones are lightly enchanted to cling in darkness. They are widely used by bounty crews, wardens, and anyone hoping to catch rather than kill.

Fae Thorncaster
Damage: 1d4
Range: 25 ft
Cost: 12 P
A compact spring launcher that fires grown barbs or treated thorns. Quiet and graceful, which is the sort of thing that makes it worse.

Orc Strapbow
Damage: 1d6+1
Range: 35 ft
Cost: 14 P
A rough but powerful bow-frame weapon built from horn, tendon, and iron reinforcement. Not refined. Not meant to be.

Storm Needle Projector
Damage: 1d4 lightning
Range: 20 ft
Cost: 18 P
A tube-and-cell weapon that spits electrified darts. Imported from storm-forge cultures and treated with the kind of paperwork that implies prior tragedy.

Astral Shard Sling
Damage: 1d4 radiant
Range: 30 ft
Cost: 16 P
A specialized sling fitted to throw charged Astral splinters. Rare, expensive, and mostly purchased by wardens, shrine militias, and collectors of mistakes.

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Armor & Shields

Armor in Limbo tends toward the practical. Most travelers want protection that works in rain, stone dust, fog, tunnel damp, and sudden violence without weighing them down so badly that the cure becomes its own hazard. Imported armor is common, but much of it is altered locally to survive Limbo's climate and routes.

Armor

Padded Jacket
AR: +1
Cost: 4 P
A quilted protective coat made from layered cloth, fungus felt, treated hide, or old military stuffing. Common among scouts, laborers, caravan guards, and lesser operatives. Cheap, warm, and easy to repair.

Warden Padding
AR: +2
Cost: 6 P
A heavier issue coat associated with wardens and route enforcers. Reinforced at the shoulders, ribs, and collar, it balances respectable protection with enough flexibility for practical movement.

Rattleplate
AR: +1
Cost: 5 P
Patchwork armor made from overlapping plates, shell pieces, or riveted scraps. It is sturdy for the price but rarely subtle. The name is deserved; anyone wearing it sounds faintly like an argument in a cookware drawer.

Shadow-Weave Vest
AR: +1
Cost: 8 P
A vest of dark layered cloth and thin hidden reinforcement treated to drink in light rather than reflect it. Favored by scouts, smugglers, and discreet professionals. Grants **+10 Stealth**.

Shellmail
AR: +2
Cost: 10 P
Made from cured and fitted shell plates, often taken from Limbo beetles, marsh beasts, or traded mollusk stock, Shellmail is durable, practical, and common in districts with strong beast-working traditions.

Stonebound Coat
AR: +3
Cost: 15 P
A heavy reinforced coat stiffened with stone scales, ceramic inserts, or mineral plates. Very protective, but cumbersome. Movement-related actions usually suffer **Disadvantage** or a penalty at the Creepmaster's discretion.

Goblin Patch-Harness — AR: +1 | Cost: 7 P
A layered leather, strap, and rivet assembly built for climbing, crouching, and surviving improvised violence. Covered in loops, buckles, and tiny repair scars.

Orc Plate Vest — AR: +2 | Cost: 14 P
A compact, brutal cuirass made for close work and labor-heavy fighting. Thick where it matters, plain where it does not.

Fae Leafmail — AR: +1 | Cost: 16 P
Layered flexible armor made from enchanted leaf-scale or leaf-like metal, prized for silence and beauty. Grants **+10 Stealth** in woodland or overgrown environments if maintained properly.

Stormskin Coat — AR: +2 | Cost: 20 P
An insulated treated coat from electrical-weather realms, resistant to static, sparks, and shock. Often worn by artificers and escort crews handling unstable devices.

Astral Veil Wrap — AR: +1 | Cost: 22 P
A layered draped defense of treated cloth and occult stitching, favored by route readers and dream-watch

personnel. Particularly useful in spiritually active environments.

Infernal Ledger Vest — AR: +1 | Cost: 14 P
A fitted armored vest of dark lacquered leather with heat-gloss scales and interior lining stitched in sulfur-red thread. Infernal merchants and lesser devil functionaries favor armor that protects without wrinkling formal wear.
Notes: Grants **+10 on tests to maintain poise, menace, or formal bearing under threat**.

Draconic Scale Mantle — AR: +3 | Cost: 65 P
A layered shoulder-and-back mantle of lacquered scale plates, usually sourced from drakes, traded wyrms, or scaled craft cultures eager to advertise prestige. It glitters subtly in lamplight and carries obvious status in the right districts.
Notes: Resistant to ordinary wear; expensive to repair badly.

Gnoll Trophy Harness — AR: +1 | Cost: 7 P
A rough strap-and-bone harness armored with scavenged plates, hide patches, and stitched trophies. It is ugly, effective, and designed with no concern for gentility.
Notes: Grants **+10 intimidation** in the right kind of ugly face-to-face encounter.

Ogre Hide Coat — AR: +2 | Cost: 11 P
A thick layered coat of cured hide and patch armor from ogre-border traders and labor camps. Heavy, smelly, and excellent at surviving abuse.
Notes: Often worn by haulers, guards, and anyone who expects to be hit by both fists and weather.

Kobold Crawlplate — AR: +1 | Cost: 8 P
A low-profile segmented chest and shoulder rig designed for vent-work, trap tunnels, and miserable crawlspaces. Kobolds understand confined movement better than most and build accordingly.
Notes: Grants **+10 on movement through cramped spaces** where armor would normally hinder.

Dwarven Plate Vest — AR: +3 | Cost: 25 P
A compact plated torso harness built for hard service, repeated repairs, and generations of practical use. Dwarven armor is made to be inherited, amended, and cursed at by descendants.
Notes: Durable; ignores the first minor fiction-level wear or damage result to armor in a journey if maintained.

Shields

Wooden Buckler
AR Bonus: +1
Cost: 2 P
A small arm shield made for quick deflection, common among scouts, caravan guards, and practical duelists.

Stone-Tile Shield
AR Bonus: +1
Cost: 4 P
Built from layered wood, shell, and a facing of fitted stone or ceramic tile. Heavier than a buckler, but durable and respected in tunnel fighting.

Warden Tower Shield
AR Bonus: +2
Cost: 8 P
A large standing shield used by patrol lines, gate crews, and serious defensive formations. Effective, but bulky enough to impose **−10 to attacks**.

Goblin Scrap Buckler — AR Bonus: +1 | Cost: 3 P
Ugly, efficient, and festooned with rivets that were once probably something else.

Orc Gate Shield — AR Bonus: +2 | Cost: 12 P
A thick brutal shield designed to hold lines and absorb punishment. Not subtle. Not light. Not interested in your objections.

Fae Mirrorleaf Guard — AR Bonus: +1 | Cost: 10 P
A delicate-seeming but resilient hand shield that catches and scatters light strangely. Worth more than it looks, which is saying something.

Gnome Buckler-Lantern — AR: +1 | Cost: 16 P
A clever shield with a shuttered built-in lamp housing at the center. Mildly ridiculous. Genuinely useful. Exactly the sort of thing gnome makers export with a straight face.
Notes: Functions as both buckler and hooded light source.

Giant Rivet Shield — AR: +2 | Cost: 14 P
A broad reinforced shield built using giant-style construction principles: oversized rivets, overbuilt frame, contempt for unnecessary elegance. Local versions are scaled down for practical use.
Notes: Slightly heavier than equivalent shields; looks like it should be mounted on a gate.

General Equipment

The ordinary goods of Limbo matter because ordinary preparedness saves lives. Much of what follows is not glamorous, but Limbo is full of graves belonging to creatures who chose glamour over rope, lamp oil, and dry socks.

Chalk Stick (5) — 1 P
A travel staple used for marking routes, doors, warnings, and temporary symbols. Local chalk is rough and dusty; imported chalk may come waxed, scented, or color-cut for ritual use.

Tinderbox — 2 P
Steel, stone, fungus-strike, or spark wheel sets are all common. Every district has a preferred style, and all of them become important the moment the dark stops being decorative.

Rope (25 ft) — 3 P
Reed rope, fungus cord, hide line, imported hemp, and braided trade fiber are all available depending on region and price. Rope is never a wasted purchase.

Glowstick — 2 P
A chemical or alchemical light tube lasting roughly 3 hours. Common in patrol packs, artificer kits, and cave markets.

Scribble Journal — 1 P
A cheap notebook for maps, route marks, debt tallies, dream fragments, and last words nobody wants to rely on memory for.

Blanket (Warm) — 1 P
A simple bed blanket of felt, woven fungus cloth, patch-hide, or imported wool. In Limbo, warmth is a practical virtue, not a luxury.

Waterskin — 1 P
Usually hide, fungus-leather, bladder-skin, or treated woven gut-cloth. Holds about 2 pints.

Food Rations — 1 P per day
Hard-baked biscuits, dried fungus cakes, smoked strips, root mash wraps, compact grain bricks, or whatever the local district swears is "travel food" and not "punishment."

Lantern (Oil) — 4 P
A standard hand lantern with 10-foot bright illumination. Limbo offers many designs: cage lanterns, fungus-glass lamps, brass imports, and Vigil issue hoods.

Oil Flask — 1 P
Enough fuel for roughly 6 hours of lantern burn, depending on the lamp.

Bag of Dust — 1 P
A soft pouch of throw-dust used to reveal footprints, disturbed air, hidden edges, or invisible movement.

Goblin Pocket Ratchet — 3 P
A folding click-tool for tiny repairs, latch work, and emergency mechanical bullying.

Orc Travel Stove Plate — 5 P
A compact flat cooking iron that keeps heat well and takes abuse personally.

Fae Dewcloth — 6 P
A fine absorbent cloth that draws moisture, mist, and condensation away from objects wrapped within it.

Ash Realm Coalstone — 4 P
A reusable heated stone popular in cold routes and miserable camps.

Stormglass Tube — 7 P
A sealed weather-reading glass from high-electrical regions. Marginally useful, deeply dramatic.

Astral Thread Spool — 9 P
A pale silvery thread used for route marking, ritual binding, or delicate portal work. Too expensive to use casually and too useful not to.

Infernal Seal Kit — 6 P
A tidy packet of wax, signers, clamps, and heat-stamps used for contracts, letters, cargo marks, and ominous formality. Infernal trade culture takes paperwork as seriously as some armies take fortifications.

Draconic Ember Flask — 5 P
A heat-retaining flask for keeping liquids hot far longer than they should remain so. Sold heavily in cold routes and by draconic merchants who are convinced every beverage deserves ceremony.

Gnoll Trophy Cord — 2 P
A braided hide cord used to carry teeth, claws, tokens, keys, or proof of prior ugly success. Practical and unpleasantly decorative.

Ogre Load Strap — 3 P
A brutally simple hauling harness strap built for weight, not comfort. Common in salvage lots and labor districts.

Giant Peg Bundle — 4 P
Oversized iron pegs sold in cut-down travel sets for bracing structures, tethering large beasts, or making sure the camp does not become a rumor by morning.

Kobold Trap Chalk — 3 P
A greasy colored marking chalk used for trap routes, false floors, trigger warnings, and coded passages. More useful than the name first suggests.

Gnome Folding Kettle — 5 P
A collapsible cook pot made from jointed thin metal plates and more confidence than seems reasonable. Surprisingly reliable.

Dwarven Tool Wedge Set — 4 P
A packet of iron wedges for doors, stone seams, supports, carts, and emergency engineering. Every dwarf merchant will tell you it is indispensable. They are usually right.

Survival & Exploration Gear

Limbo rewards the traveler who expects the road to betray them and packs accordingly. These goods are the common language of scouts, trackers, ruin-runners, marsh-guides, and portal crews.

Climbing Spikes — 5 P
Hammer-set grips for wall work, shaft descent, and rough ascent. Grant **+10 on Climb tests** in suitable surfaces.

Grappling Hook — 3 P
A simple but essential throw-and-secure tool. Available in plain iron, fold-hook, and shell-pronged local variants.

Mini-Shovel — 1 P
Useful for digging, trenching, burial, fungus scraping, fire pits, and all the little indignities of survival.

Cave Map Kit — 2 P
A compact set of chalk, wax paper, route tabs, and marking cord intended for mapping caverns and ruin networks.

Spelunker Rope Reel — 6 P
A spring or crank reel holding rope for quick deployment and retrieval. Often imported in parts and repaired locally.

Gas Mask — 8 P
A fitted breathing mask made with filter cloth, treated sponge, resin plates, or imported alchemical cartridges. Grants strong protection against fumes and bad air.

Tunnel Alarm Bells — 3 P
Simple bell-line warning gear for camps, passages, or hidden approaches.

Portable Bridge (Folding) — 20 P
A serious piece of expedition kit, made from hinged

slats, collapsible frames, or artificer braces. Can span up to 30 feet.

Glow-Chalk (6 colors) — 3 P
Colored marking chalk visible in darkness, used for coded routes, warning systems, and multi-party exploration.

Vibration Meter — 12 P
A delicate tool for detecting tremors, movement through stone, or unstable ground. Common among miners, engineers, and cautious explorers.

Goblin Crawl Rig — 12 P
A chest-and-back strap assembly for moving through ducts, vents, or narrow passagework while keeping essential tools accessible.

Orc Trail Pegs — 4 P
Heavy route stakes for hard ground, strong wind, or stubborn beasts.

Fae Lantern Hood — 10 P
A decorative but functional lantern cover that softens harsh light and reduces visible spill.

Stormline Rod — 11 P
A testing rod for static charge, bad field pressure, or unstable machinery.

Astral Route Flags — 15 P
Thin treated marker pennants used by professional route teams during unstable crossings. Expensive, delicate, and deeply worth it to the right sort of traveler.

Infernal Heat-Mask — 9 P
A fitted breathing and face cover treated against smoke, cinders, and sulfur stink. Common in ash realms and welcome in half of Limbo's worst districts.

Draconic Route Lens — 12 P
A polished scaled-glass monocle used to inspect heat seams, weak stone, and hidden channels of rising air. Draconic surveyors swear by them. Everyone else resents the price.

Gnoll Carrion Scent Pouch — 4 P
A foul-smelling hunting and masking pouch used to throw off beasts, conceal camp scent, or befoul a rival's sleeping space.
Notes: Grants **+10 on tests to avoid scent-tracking** in the right circumstances.

Ogre Camp Spikes — 5 P
Thick heavy campsite stakes for beast lines, sled ties, and structural emergency use. Useful anywhere the ground feels argumentative.

Giant Signal Cone — 8 P
A booming speaking cone used in bad weather, cavern work, and large labor sites. Ridiculous for conversation. Excellent for command.

Kobold Vent-Crawler Pack — 10 P
A tight harness kit with low-profile pouches, crawling pads, and tool loops arranged for movement through shafts and wall guts.

Gnome Pocket Surveyor — 14 P
A brass-folding measurement device used for angle reading, mapping, and telling everyone nearby that someone has become serious.

Dwarven Depth Chain — 7 P
A weighted measuring chain for shaft depth, water depth, and the sort of structural questions that separate miners from the dead.

Trade Goods

Not everything sold in Limbo is meant to be used immediately. Some goods are valuable precisely because they travel well, trade cleanly, or serve as the raw material of other crafts. These goods often reveal

the cultures and industries most deeply tied to the nexus.

Lumishards — 5 P
Small charged crystals used to power magical devices, lamps, signaling gear, and certain ritual tools. Common trade stock from crystal-working cultures.

Mushroom Mead — 3 P
A jug of fungal brew, often earthy, sweet, or unsettlingly medicinal depending on district. Popular across Limbo and surprisingly exportable.

Chalk Blocks — 4 P
Bulk chalk for route marking, inscriptions, construction, and ritual work.

Spell Parchment — 5 P
Prepared writing sheets meant to hold arcane notation without immediate degradation. Essential to enchanters, rune-scholars, and licensed magical study.

Scrap Metal Bundle — 8 P
Mixed salvage iron, brass, fittings, and cut fragments sold by weight or bundle. Highly useful to artificers, smiths, and practical repair crews.

Leather Strips — 1 P
Crafting staple for straps, wrappings, patch jobs, tie-downs, and quick harness fixes.

Creep Dolls — 2 P
Toy figures sold to children, travelers, shrine visitors, and sentimental fools. Some are harmless. Some are unsettling on purpose.

Soot Ink Bottle — 2 P
A durable black writing ink made from soot, resin, and binding fluid. Common in archives, contracts, and rough field notation.

Thornvine Coils — 4 P
Tough living or semi-living binding vine used in packing, securing, and certain ritual practices.

Dimensional Sand — 15 P
Rare trade substance used in high artificery, threshold study, and certain delicate magical calibrations. Often tightly controlled.

Goblin Gear Bundles — 6 P
Mixed hooks, loops, broken mechanisms, fixable clasps, and small useful nonsense sold in knotted sacks. Half junk, half treasure.

Orc Forge Nails — 4 P
Large square-headed fasteners used in armor, wagons, gates, and anything expected to survive impact.

Fae Resin Candles — 7 P
Perfumed ritual candles that burn slowly and with unnervingly pretty steady flame.

Elemental Salt Bricks — 10 P
Mineral blocks cut from fire, storm, frost, or deep-earth realms. Used in alchemy, preserving, warding, and crafts.

Astral Linen — 12 P
Pale cloth with a faint silvery cast, used in elite clothing, ritual wraps, and high-end bedding for people with dream trouble and money.

Portal Wax Seals — 8 P
Prepared wax tokens stamped by licensed threshold workers for marking goods safe for transit.

Draconic Scale Varnish — 10 P
A glossy preserving lacquer used on armor, shields, ceremonial goods, and expensive luggage. Beautiful and annoyingly effective.

Gnoll Tooth Bracelets — 3 P
Sold as ornaments, tokens, charms, or proof that market taste has surrendered. Popular in rough districts and among children with dreadful role models.

Ogre Quarry Salt — 5 P
Heavy mineral salt blocks used in preserving, beast feeding, and labor camp trade. Boring until desperately needed.

Giant Forge Staples — 7 P
Large industrial fasteners used in wagons, bridgework, gate repair, and overconfident engineering.

Kobold Firepowder Packets — 8 P
Small packets of trap or ignition powder sold for legal blasting, signal use, or illegal enthusiasm.

Gnome Prism Dice — 4 P
Tiny clever gaming dice cut from colored glass or crystal. Popular in inns, caravans, and among people who enjoy losing money artistically.

Dwarven Black Oil — 6 P
A heavy maintenance oil for metal tools, locks, carts, and anything expected to survive honest work.

Ember Pearl — 20 P
A tiny heat-holding bead from volcanic dimensions, used in artificery and ritual heating.

Frozen Breath Vials — 18 P
Glass vials containing visible preserved cold from a deep frost realm. Used in alchemy, traps, and very expensive party tricks.

Living Briar Coil — 16 P
A bound vine from fae wilds that still grows if fed properly. Useful and hateful in equal measure.

Stormbone Splinters — 22 P
Charged fragments from creatures or structures touched by repeated lightning passage. Regulated in some districts.

Astral Pearl Dust — 30 P
An extremely fine shimmering powder used in route tuning, high ritual preparation, and certain forms of Dreamcraft.

Mirror Sand — 25 P
A reflective grain harvested from a dangerous dimension where surfaces think too much. Useful in divination, concealment work, and bad decisions.

Medical Equipment

Creep medicine is practical, improvised, and rarely elegant. It exists to keep a body moving, close what can be closed, and prevent the world from finishing a job it has already started.

Bandage Roll — 2 P
Stabilize a wounded target; grants **+10 to Medicine** when properly used.

Herbal Poultice — 3 P
A wrapped paste of herbs, moss, fungus, and cooling agents; grants **+20 to Medicine** when properly used.

Antifungal Salve — 2 P
Protects against spores and fungal irritation for 1 hour.

Pain-Dulling Syrup — 5 P
Reduces the duration of **Dazed** by 1 round.

Tunnel Salts — 1 P
Sharp revival salts used to wake an unconscious Creep immediately at **0 HP**.

Stitching Kit — 6 P
Thread, hooks, clamps, and field needles. Adds **+10 Medicine** where stitching is appropriate.

Splint Set — 2 P
Simple braces and wrappings for stabilizing limbs and reducing movement penalties.

Purification Drops — 4 P
Clean foul water and neutralize basic toxins.

Sticky Wrap — 3 P
Adhesive wound-binding strips; grants **+20 to**

Medicine in situations where holding a wound closed matters.

Cave-Antiseptic — 6 P
Strong-smelling wash that prevents infection and cures mundane illness before it worsens.

Goblin Stitch Clips — 5 P
Tiny clamp-fasteners used to close cuts quickly in the field without elegant bedside manners.

Orc Bone Brace — 7 P
A sturdy support harness for damaged limbs, ribs, or joints. Built to return someone to work before a healer would approve.

Fae Sleep Balm — 9 P
A fragrant salve applied to brow or throat to encourage calm sleep. Useful, expensive, and rarely given to children without prayer.

Ash Pepper Tincture — 4 P
A brutal stimulant wash or drink used to keep a patient conscious through shock, pain, or surgical profanity.

Storm Nerve Needle — 12 P
A specialized treatment tool used to jolt numb limbs or failing consciousness. Often effective. Never pleasant.

Astral Recovery Wrap — 15 P
A treated wrap used after difficult portal crossing or dream-route illness, intended to help the body "settle" back into itself.

Infernal Burn Balm — 8 P
A dark red salve that treats heat injury, smoke cracking, and flame bites. Smells like cinnamon, sulfur, and legal peril.

Draconic Heat Draught — 10 P
A warming tonic used against cold, shock, and frost-route exhaustion.
Effect: Grants **+10 on tests to resist cold** for 1 hour.

Gnoll Blood-Clot Paste — 4 P
A fast-acting ugly field dressing that staunches bleeding with admirable efficiency and zero bedside charm.

Ogre Bruise Syrup — 5 P
A thick bitter syrup for pain, swelling, and keeping laborers functional through the sort of work wiser people would refuse.

Alchemical Supplies & Products

Limbo's alchemical trade is lively, competitive, and occasionally explosive. The chapter on Alchemy covers how such preparations are made. What follows are the common prepared goods already moving through the markets.

Glowgel — 4 P
Makes objects glow for 1 hour. Used on tools, markers, doors, arrows, beasts, and people who have made poor stealth decisions.

Boomdust (Tiny) — 8 P
Thrown to 10 feet; deals **1 fire damage** and a spray of sparks.

Spore-Soother — 3 P
Grants **+10 on tests vs. poison or spores** for 1 hour.

Grim-Tonic — 5 P
Removes **Dazed** instantly.

Dustfoot Vial — 6 P
Grants **+10 Stealth** for 1 hour, usually by suppressing trail noise and visual residue.

Grimshine Oil — 4 P
Coat a weapon; it deals **+1 damage on the next hit**.

Nightcap Draught — 3 P
Allows safe voluntary sleep and assists Essence recovery.

Frostpuff Flask — 7 P
Creates a 5-foot cold burst, dealing **1d4 cold damage**.

Tanglegrease — 5 P
Creates a 5-foot slick surface that calls for a balance or Grace-related test.

Astral Pebble Tea — 10 P
Grants **+10 to Portal Detection** for 1 hour.

Goblin Smog Vial — 6 P
A filthy but effective smoke charge that stinks like industrial guilt and grants immediate concealment.

Orc War Resin — 10 P
A thick dark coat applied to weapons, shields, or armor to harden them briefly under impact. Grants **+3 damage on the next strike** or **+1 AR for one session at Creepmaster discretion**.

Fae Dewfire Oil — 11 P
A pale glowing oil that burns cool and beautiful until it suddenly doesn't. Used in ritual lamps, lure tricks, and emotional mistakes.

Frostglass Dust — 8 P
A chill-reactive powder that flashes surfaces slick with rime.

Stormgrit Packet — 10 P
Charged grit used for spark preparations, shock traps, and making a doorway interesting.

Astral Wake Draught — 14 P
A difficult, pale drink used after long portal travel to steady perception and reduce route-sickness. Grants **+10 on the next test to resist dream or portal disorientation**.

Giant Forge Ash Poultice — 7 P
A mineral-rich warm poultice used for strain, smashed joints, and heat-work recovery.

Kobold Flash-Grease — 6 P
A tiny pot of slippery flammable grease used in trap work, sabotage, or highly unethical kitchen experiments.

Gnome Calmwater Drops — 9 P
A delicate sedative solution for panic, nausea, and post-portal trembling.
Effect: Grants **+10 on a test to resist panic, route-sickness, or tremor**.

Dwarven Bone Tea — 5 P
A bitter mineral tea used after shock, fractures, and hard travel. Tastes like a cave that disapproves of weakness.

Vehicles

No equipment chapter for Limbo is complete without vehicles. Roads may be bad, but cargo still moves. Patrols still travel. Ferries still earn. Salvage still needs hauling. Not every district can rely on mounted transport alone.

Land Vehicles

Hand-Cart — 15 P
A single-axle or drag-frame cart for one Creep or one small beast to pull. Common in market lanes and salvage quarters.

Two-Creep Wagon — 30 P
A practical small wagon for two passengers and moderate cargo. Built for roads that are still willing to be called roads.

Stone Sled — 25 P
A low drag-sled used on smooth caverns, ice-polished tunnels, ash flats, or wet hauled ground.

Glow-Lantern Cart — 40 P
A lighted patrol or escort cart fitted with bright lamps. Favored by the Vigil and by merchants who prefer being seen before being robbed.

Rumblewagon — 75 P
A heavy rough-ground wagon with thick wheels and reinforced suspension, suited to bad routes and stubborn cargo.

Goblin Scuttle Cart — 45 P
A low many-wheeled cargo cart built for speed in narrow districts and rough lane corners. Irritatingly efficient.

Orc Iron Sledge — 60 P
A reinforced drag vehicle built for hostile terrain, quarry roads, or military hauling. Looks like it expects weather to apologize.

Fae Reed Coach — 90 P
A beautifully light enclosed carriage from forest realms, usually adapted locally with stronger wheels and less optimism.

Storm Runner Skiff — 80 P
A narrow water-or-marsh craft with reinforced metal ribs and insulated tiller work for charged waterways.

Astral Guide Barge — rare, 150+ P or licensed contract only
A specialized ferry or barge modified for threshold-adjacent waters and route-guided crossings. More often hired than owned.

Infernal Ledger Wagon — 85 P
A lockable trade wagon built with hidden compartments, reinforced contract chest, and the implied threat of audit. Favored by infernal merchants and everyone who hates them.

Draconic Pack Frame — 14 P
A high-quality saddle-pack frame built for scaled beasts, long marches, and expensive cargo.

Ogre Haul Sled — 40 P
A thick drag-frame vehicle for labor routes, quarries, and miserable salvage zones. Crude, strong, and unembarrassed by it.

Kobold Burrow Sled — 22 P
A low narrow transport frame used in tunnelworks and crawl-route haul chains. Can go places a cart cannot and a reasonable person should not.

Gnome Brake Cart — 55 P
A small engineering cart with an elaborate braking assembly for steep roads and shaft descents. Too clever until exactly the right moment.

Dwarven Mule Harness — 6 P
A famously durable beast rig with tool loops, chain points, and reinforced pull straps. Every copy claims to be genuine. Most are lying.

Boats & Watercraft

Cavern Skiff — 30 P
A flat river craft for underground waterways and low tunnel currents.

Stillwater Canoe — 20 P
A light one- or two-creature canoe for quiet water and narrow channels.

Glow-Ferry — 100 P
A lantern-lit transport craft for serious river work, passenger movement, and night crossings.

Deepcurrent Punt — 50 P
A narrow craft meant for punting through tight currents, tunnel channels, and broken underground water routes.

Mounts & Dray Beasts of Limbo

Limbo's beasts of burden are every bit as regional as its roads. Some are native to marshes, sink caverns, and fungus wilds. Others are bred by trade clans, hauling companies, shrine roads, or tunnel communities. A proper mount or dray beast is not only

transport. It is labor, patience, survival, smell, appetite, temperament, and one more reason to keep your camp orderly.

Burrow Yak

Region: Caverns
Wounds: 8
Attack: Horn Bash (1d6+2)
A Burrow Yak is a broad, shaggy underground dray beast with a deep chest, heavy shoulders, and sweeping low horns polished by tunnel walls and bad tempers. Its coat ranges from slate-brown to fungus-grey, often matted with cave dust and mineral damp. Burrow Yaks are patient, strong, and famously unimpressed by panic, making them ideal for carts, wagons, and long hauling through stable tunnels. They dislike bright light and narrow rope bridges, but otherwise endure almost anything with agricultural contempt.
Loot: Tough Hide (1)

Glowslug

Region: Wet Tunnels
Wounds: 6
Attack: Slime Splash (1d4)
A saddle-trained Glowslug is a large luminescent tunnel slug with a broad gripping underside and a softly glowing body in shades of pearl, amber, or blue-green. Its movement is slow but astonishingly secure over slick surfaces, wet walls, and narrow ledges. Some traders use them as living climbing platforms in damp vertical districts. Their slime is valuable, their temperament placid, and their appearance unforgettable.
Loot: Glow Slime (1 vial)

Stoneback Beetle

Region: Cavern Floors
Wounds: 9
Attack: Mandible (1d8)
Stoneback Beetles are massive load-bearing insects with broad armored carapaces that resemble broken flagstone from a distance. Their shell colors vary by region, from basalt black to cave ochre to mineral red. Traders favor them for pack hauling because they are tireless, low-maintenance, and difficult to intimidate. Their motion is slow but steady, and a properly harnessed Stoneback can carry astonishing weight for its size.
Loot: Chitin Plates (1–2)

Rumblepuff

Region: Mossy Caverns
Wounds: 5
Attack: Butt (1d4)
A Rumblepuff is a round springy cave creature with thick moss-soft fur, wide feet, and an elastic body that bounces rather than runs when excited. Used more often for scouting, message-running, and light pack work than heavy hauling, they are beloved by

some handlers and distrusted by anyone who has watched one ricochet through a supply tent. Their puffspores are valuable and not easy to collect without argument.
Loot: Puffspores (rare)

Tunnel Wyrmling

Region: Deep Tunnels
Wounds: 6
Attack: Bite (1d4)
Not a true dragon by any civilized standard, the Tunnel Wyrmling is a small reptilian wall-runner with slick scales, gripping claws, and a long body built for stone crevices and vertical movement. Some are kept as agile riding beasts by smaller folk or as courier mounts in deep-route settlements. They are quick, suspicious, and much smarter than handlers prefer to admit.
Loot: Small Wyrm Scale (1)

Polecat Dray

Region: Dry Caverns
Wounds: 7
Attack: Bite (1d8)
Long-bodied, sharp-faced, and built low to the ground, the Polecat Dray combines the hauling utility of a pack beast with the temperament of something that resents domestication as a political concept. Their coats are coarse and dark, often banded or stripe-backed depending on breeding line. They can pull small wagons, climb dry grade better than many cart beasts, and defend themselves enthusiastically if mishandled.
Loot: Fur Tuft

Thorn-Hopper

Region: Forested Caverns
Wounds: 5
Attack: Kick (1d4)
The Thorn-Hopper is a small stag-like insect beast with hooked limbs, faceted eyes, and decorative thorn-antlers used in mating displays and occasional violence. Swift and spring-legged, they are used for courier work, light riding, and scouting in overgrown cavern regions. Their movements are abrupt, silent, and spectacularly unhelpful to nervous riders.
Loot: Thorn Antlers (1)

Glowfish Paddler

Region: Underground Rivers
Wounds: 6
Attack: Fin Slap (1d4)
A Glowfish Paddler is a large harness-trained river beast with wide fins, thick slick scales, and bioluminescent striping that pulses along its sides in dark water. They are used in certain river settlements as living mounts, tow-beasts, or guide swimmers through difficult currents. Their appearance can be almost beautiful in the wrong way, which is often how Limbo announces something useful.
Loot: Glow Scale (1–2)

Crag-Mole

Region: Rocky Tunnels
Wounds: 8
Attack: Burrow Chomp (1d8)
The Crag-Mole is a broad-shouldered blind digging beast with stone-worn claws, a wedge skull, and dense hide scarred by generations of mining labor. It is used in excavation, tunneling, ore hauling, and heavy underground work. Though poor above ground and irritable in noisy camp, it is one of the most prized labor beasts in mining settlements.
Loot: Mole Claw (1)

Ember Goat

Region: Volcanic Caverns
Wounds: 7
Attack: Fire Horn (1d6 fire)
Ember Goats are rangy horned heat-beasts with ash-colored coats, ember-bright eyes, and breath that

steams in cooler tunnels. Warm to the touch and naturally suited to sulfur vents, lava chambers, and heat-cut passages, they are favored in volcanic trade corridors where ordinary stock would fail quickly. Their horns retain heat long after death and are traded as valuable alchemical and craft material.
Loot: Ember Horn (1)

Ash Hound

Region: Imported from volcanic ash-realms; now common in hot trade corridors
Wounds: 6
Attack: Bite (1d6)
A lean heat-tolerant riding beast with charcoal fur, ember-bright eyes, and breath that fogs in cold tunnels. Used as courier mounts in harsh routes and prized for tirelessness in hot districts.
Loot: Ember Fur Tuft

Mire Elk

Region: Brought from drowned forest margins and fae marsh crossings
Wounds: 8
Attack: Antler Gore (1d6+1)
Tall and long-legged, with wet dark coat and reed-tangled antlers, Mire Elk serve as elegant but temperamental riding animals in marsh and flooded woodland terrain. They are beautiful in the way many expensive poor ideas are beautiful.
Loot: Marsh Antler (1)

Cog Mule

Region: Imported from industrial gear-realms
Wounds: 7
Attack: Kick (1d6)
Not actually mechanical, despite first impressions, the Cog Mule is a compact powerful dray beast bred by machine cultures and fitted with harness systems of alarming efficiency. Excellent for hauling and deeply suspicious of poets.
Loot: Heavy Harness Scrap

Lantern Crane

Region: Wet shrine-lands and luminous river worlds
Wounds: 5
Attack: Beak Jab (1d4)
A tall narrow marsh bird used for pack carrying through shallow water and soft ground. Its hanging throat sac glows faintly in darkness, making it useful and difficult to lose.
Loot: Glow Feather

Provisions, Services, and Trade in Limbo

Limbo's economy therefore extends far beyond the sale of objects. It includes lodgings, repairs, route fees, ferry contracts, exchange services, beast care, salvage appraisal, ritual preparation, and the practical support structure required by a realm where visitors from many worlds insist on staying alive at the same time.

Food & Drink

Food in Limbo varies enormously by district, trade route, and the courage of the cook. Some staples are local, built from fungus, marsh root, cave fish, preserved grains, and things that are technically livestock provided one does not insult the handler by asking too many questions. Other foods arrive through trade: hard travel breads from military worlds, smoked meats from dry stone kingdoms, sweet fermented syrups from forest realms, fungus wines from under-realms, and imported spice bundles that make an otherwise honest bowl of stew behave like a confession.

A Creep who travels often will eventually learn the cardinal rule of interdimensional food commerce: if everyone in the room is cheerfully eating it, it is probably safe. If only one elegant stranger is eating it and smiling too much, ask at least two more questions.

Common Food & Drink

Travel Biscuits — 1 P per day's portion
Hard-baked, dry, and nearly indestructible, these are the standard ration cakes sold across Limbo. Most are made from grain meal, fungus flour, root starch, or mixed salvage ingredients that no one advertises in detail.

Moss Stew Bowl — 1 P
A warm bowl of district stew made from moss broth, root chunks, dried meat if available, and whatever the cook believes the law will permit. Found everywhere from tunnel inns to ferry kitchens.

Marshfish Strips — 2 P
Salted or smoked slices of river or cave fish, sold wrapped in reed paper. A common trail food in wet districts.

Glowcap Tea — 1 P
A mild fungus infusion served in many shrines, inns, and night houses. Useful for staying warm and pretending your nerves are a personality trait rather than a medical event.

Mushroom Mead — 3 P per jug
Already noted in trade goods, but common enough to deserve mention here. Thick, earthy, and stronger than it tastes when brewed properly.

Cave Salt Cakes — 2 P
Dense mineral-rich ration bars favored by laborers, miners, and anyone whose profession involves sweating in places sunlight has not visited recently.

Red Broth — 2 P
A richer district soup made from fungus stock, marrow, root mash, and usually enough pepper or local spice to remind you the cook has known hardship and wishes to share it.

Lanternbread Loaf — 2 P
A pale shelf-stable bread baked with preserving fungus and faint salt-sweet crusting. Common in market wards and caravan depots.

Imported and Unusual Foods

Goblin Crack-Spice Packets — 3 P
Little folded wax papers filled with hot powdered seasoning from goblinoid trade clans. Sprinkled on stew, roasted fungi, dried meat, or poor decisions. Intensely flavorful, mildly addictive, and known to start arguments over who touched the last packet.

Orc Hearth Jerky — 4 P
Heavy-cured strips of dark meat rubbed in smoke salt, bitter herbs, and iron-rich spice blends from orcish caravan cultures. Tough, sustaining, and a favorite among guards who prefer their food to feel like an oath.

Fae Honey-Peel — 5 P
Thin curls of candied rind soaked in perfumed honey syrup from forest-fae realms. Delicious, expensive, and suspiciously nostalgic. Many swear it tastes like childhood. That is not always meant kindly.

Ash-Rum Drops — 4 P
Small hard sweets from volcanic trade enclaves, flavored with spiced sugar and smoke-distillate. Often used to cut bad air, settle nerves, or make a soldier's drink tolerable.

Moonmilk Custard Pots — 6 P
Imported from pale cavern principalities and sold mostly in respectable districts. Soft, cold, faintly luminous, and ruinously delicate to transport. Popular among scholars, invalids, and people who insist on

dessert in places where dessert feels morally inappropriate.

Glassfruit Preserves — 8 P
Rare orchard fruit imported from a crystalline plane where the trees grow translucent skin over jewel-bright flesh. Sold in tiny jars to rich fools, nostalgic nobles, and Creeps who have briefly forgotten rent exists.

Spark Eel Paste — 5 P
A salty electric-smelling spread from storm-water cultures, often smeared on hard bread or root cakes. Strong flavor, stronger reputation, and mildly numbing if prepared honestly.

Gravesweet Cordial — 7 P
A bitter-sweet black cordial from mourning cultures that treat funerary hospitality as sacred art. A little glass goes a long way, and two little glasses go a surprising distance toward confessions.

Lodging & Shelter

In Limbo, lodging is never just sleep. It is also dryness, privacy, warmth, safety, legal protection, and a chance of waking up with your gear, your memory, and roughly the same number of companions you had when you arrived. Cheap lodgings exist in abundance. Good lodgings do not, and should be paid for with either Pebbles or gratitude powerful enough to survive daylight.

Common Lodging

Flophouse Mat Space — 1 P
A floor mat, shared room, communal heat source, and varying levels of theft risk. Common in poor districts, river wards, and trade alleys.

Common Room Cot — 2 P
A narrow cot in a shared sleeping chamber, usually with a lockbox if the establishment is feeling ambitious.

Private Room — 3 P
A small lockable room with bedroll or proper bedding, lamp shelf, wash bowl, and walls thick enough to encourage hope.

Stable Loft Space — 1 P
Cheap sleeping room above or beside beast stalls. Warm, fragrant, and best reserved for travelers who prefer exhaustion over standards.

Better and Stranger Lodging

Vigil-Road House Bed — 4–6 P
Secure lodging in a licensed patrol inn or road house, usually cleaner, safer, and less theatrical than civilian alternatives. Not always available to the undeserving.

Shrine Guest Cell — 2–5 P donation equivalent
A simple clean room offered by temple, shrine, or threshold-watch communities. Quiet, warm, and often watched by something older than the accounting books.

Fae Guest Nook — 8 P or negotiated favor
A forest-fae lodging arrangement of alarming beauty and unreliable emotional consequences. Comfortable, clean, and prone to unsettling dreams. Guests should read any invitation twice.

Astral Rest Chamber — 10–20 P
A specialized room designed for travelers recovering from portal crossing, Dream Passage exposure, or unstable Astral return. Includes warding, filtered air, and staff trained not to panic when the walls start remembering things.

Services

Services make the nexus function. A realm with markets but no repairers, brokers, guides, ferrymen,

handlers, exchange clerks, route readers, and discreet professional liars would stop being a realm of trade and become a realm of abandoned carts.

Common Services

Currency Exchange — service fee per 50 coins or pebbles exchanged
Standard conversion of foreign coinage into Pebbles or the reverse where legally available.

Basic Gear Repair — 1–5 P
Mending straps, patching coats, resetting buckles, sharpening blades, replacing lamp hinges, and similar practical labor.

Armor Repair — 3–10 P
Depends heavily on damage, material, and whether the armor was made by a sane culture.

Beast Stabling — 1–4 P per day
Basic feeding, shelter, and tethering for mounts and dray beasts.

Ferry Passage — 2–12 P
Short local water routes, district ferries, and licensed river movement.

Guide Hire — 5–20 P per route or day
Local tunnel guides, marsh readers, district escorts, and specialist ruin runners.

Salvage Appraisal — 2–8 P
A broker, artificer, or fence evaluates the likely value of goods recovered from ruins, crossings, or battle sites.

Message Carrying — 1–6 P
Courier work within a district or between nearby safe routes.

Specialized Services

Licensed Route Reading — 10–25 P
A trained guide or occult surveyor evaluates the current stability of a dangerous passage, tunnel route, shrine path, or partial portal corridor.

Threshold Cleansing — 8–30 P
A ritual team, sorcerer, or shrine worker clears minor taint, dream residue, or low-grade spiritual contamination from a doorway, room, wagon, or campsite.

Discrete Removal — price varies, usually 10 P and upward
A wonderfully dishonest phrase covering everything from moving contraband to quietly relocating a cursed mirror. Legality uncertain. Professionalism variable.

Contract Witnessing — 5–15 P
A Vigil clerk, broker, shrine official, or recognized neutral party witnesses an agreement and records terms.

Dream-Watch Service — 8–20 P
A specialist sits watch over a sleeping subject expected to suffer nightmare pressure, portal bleed, or dream-route instability.

Artificer Goods

Artificers in Limbo sit at the useful intersection of engineering, enchantment, scavenging, and professional impatience. Their goods range from modestly clever to financially insulting. Most are practical. A few are visionary. Some were clearly made by people who should not have been allowed coffee.

Common Artificer Goods

Spark Latch — 12 P
A lock or clasp with a minor shock discharge for tampering hands.

Heat Lens Lantern Shutter — 8 P
A fitted lantern lens that narrows and strengthens

light in one direction, ideal for tunnel searching and signal work.

Self-Winding Rope Reel — 15 P
A better version of the common spelunker reel, usually imported in pieces and rebuilt locally.

Filter Veil — 10 P
A reusable face veil with layered treated cloth for dust, spores, and common bad air.

Balance Treads — 9 P
Strapped foot grips or oversoles designed to improve footing on slick stone, shell, ice, or marsh planks. Usually grant +10 to a relevant balance or footing test in proper terrain.

Glowglass Marker Chips — 6 P
Small luminous chips used to mark routes without open flame.

Imported and Exotic Artificer Goods

Goblin Ratchet Harness — 18 P
An ingeniously ugly strap rig from goblinoid gearwrights, designed for climbing, hauling, and attaching tools where they can be reached in half a panic. Looks ridiculous. Works perfectly.

Orc Forge-Brace — 20 P
A heavy reinforcement brace for arm, shoulder, or back, used by laborers and warriors from hard-forge cultures. Excellent for hauling and breaking; terrible for subtle social introductions.

Fae Glass Compass — 25 P
A beautiful compass-like device that points not north, but toward the strongest emotionally meaningful route in the immediate area. Invaluable in the right story, dangerous in the wrong one.

Stormcoil Battery Cell — 30 P
Imported from a lightning-work dimension, these heavy cells store electrical charge for rods, lamps, gates, and wands. Temperamental in wet weather. Vindictive in incompetent hands.

Ash Kingdom Filter Helm — 22 P
A full-face breathing helm from cinder realms, built for heat, smoke, and volcanic grit. Effective, expensive, and somehow always faintly accusatory in appearance.

Astral Tuning Fork — 40 P
A delicate instrument used by portal technicians, route surveyors, and highly paid worriers to test the stability of nearby threshold resonance.

CHAPTER 14: HERBS & FORAGING

Below is a manuscript-ready list of **Limbo alchemical forage** suitable for use with the **Foraging** skill. These substances are the sort of things a careful scavenger, tracker, hedge-worker, or half-mad ruin-picker might gather from Limbo's wetlands, corpse-gardens, ash gullies, drowned roads, fungal vaults, and dream-sick thickets.

Use the following rarity bands when a character attempts to locate them with **Foraging**:

- **Common**: +10
- **Uncommon**: +0
- **Rare**: -10
- **Very Rare**: -20

A successful test usually produces enough material for **one useful preparation, dose, or ingredient bundle**, unless the Creepmaster rules that the area is unusually rich or recently harvested.

Limbo Alchemical Forage

Ashcap Shelf-Mold
Rarity: **Common** (+10 Foraging)
This flat grey fungal growth spreads along burned beams, collapsed rafters, and half-charred ruins in layered shelves like dusty paper fans. It crumbles easily into a fine mineral-smelling powder. Alchemists use it in smoke-vials, preservative dusts, and dry compounds meant to deaden scent or suppress rot.

Blackbone Truffle
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
Buried beneath root systems and found only by careful scenting or patient soil-reading, Blackbone Truffles are hard, knotted fungal bulbs streaked with white and grey like marrow inside stone. Their odor is earthy and faintly bloody. They are rendered into potent restorative stocks, endurance tonics, and rare preservative pastes for valuable ingredients.

Bogglass Beads
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
These smooth translucent nodules are found embedded in marsh muck, old floodbeds, and drowned ritual sites, usually in clusters like frog eggs made of clouded glass. They crack sharply when heated. Powdered Bogglass is useful in filtration, alchemical thickening, and certain unstable spark compounds.

Cinder Pollen
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
Collected from the fragile stamens of low heat-loving flowers that bloom in warm ash drifts and cracked volcanic pockets of Limbo, Cinder Pollen is bright orange and dangerously fine. It ignites easily if mishandled. It is highly valued in flash-powders, fireburst gels, spark-pastes, and alchemical ignition mixes.

Corpse-Lily Resin
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
Drawn from the roots and base bulbs of the pale Corpse-Lily, this sticky amber resin smells sweet for a moment and foul immediately after. The lily itself grows in rich black soil around sinkholes, battle-pits, and flooded crypt edges. The resin is useful in preservative waxes, embalming agents, and the making of strong-smelling masking compounds.

Dream-Leech Vine
Rarity: **Very Rare** (-20 Foraging)
This thin blue-grey vine grows only in places where sleep has gone wrong repeatedly: abandoned infirmaries, vigil chambers, dream shrines, and hidden nooks where the exhausted

have lain too long. Its leaves are soft as skin and close at touch. Alchemists use it in soporifics, dream-control brews, memory-clouding draughts, and highly regulated trance compounds.

Drowned Mint
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
Drowned Mint grows in flooded graveyards, low marsh islands, and the edges of blackwater canals, its leaves deep green on top and corpse-pale beneath. Bruised, it releases a sharp clean scent that briefly cuts through the stink of Limbo. It is prized for breath-clearing tinctures, anti-nausea draughts, and focus tonics used before delicate alchemical work.

Ghostfen Nettle
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
A translucent nettle that grows only where fog sits low over still water, Ghostfen Nettle carries nearly invisible hairs that sting with cold rather than heat. Harvesters favor thick gloves and bad language. It is useful in numbing washes, cold-distillations, and compounds meant to sharpen alertness by making the body very briefly miserable.

Grave-Moss
Rarity: **Common** (+10 Foraging)
Grave-Moss is a pale green mat of damp, velvet-soft growth that clings to old stone, coffin-wood, and waterlogged foundations. It smells faintly of rain, cold dirt, and opened cellars. Alchemists dry it into soft binding pulp, steep it into poultices, or use it as a stabilizing base for restorative brews and slow-acting salves.

Heartfire Orchid
Rarity: **Very Rare** (-20 Foraging)
A rare wetland orchid with deep red petals around a hot orange center, Heartfire Orchid grows in places where heat, rot, and life all struggle together—steam-fens, corpse composts, and warm spring bogs. Its scent is rich and almost meaty. It is prized in vitality tonics, aggressive stimulants, aphrodisiac preparations, and the dangerous alchemical category politely referred to as "overcorrection."

Hollow Amber
Rarity: **Very Rare** (-20 Foraging)
Not true amber, but a strange fossil-like resin found in ancient sinkwood, dead grove-hearts, and drowned petrified roots, Hollow Amber is cloudy gold with tiny trapped air bubbles that sometimes seem to move. When warmed, it gives off a resinous smell tinged with old honey and cellar dust. It is highly valued in preservative varnishes, spirit-binding mediums, and long-lasting alchemical suspensions.

Hollowseed Pods
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
These brittle seed-pods grow on waist-high ghost-vines in abandoned gardens and drowned courtyards. Each pod is dry, papery, and filled with faintly rattling black seeds. When ground or burned, the seeds produce useful bitter smoke, making them common ingredients in insect-smokes, choking irritants, and concealment mixtures.

Knuckleroot
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
This twisted brown root grows in clumps beneath dead trees and corpse-fed soil, shaped like curled fingers or knotted joints. It is tough, bitter, and full of milky sap. Alchemists shave it into pain-numbing brews, stimulant pastes,

and tonics meant to keep the body moving through fatigue or minor hurt.

Lanternbladder Fungus
Rarity: **Common** (+10 Foraging)
This thumb-sized swamp fungus grows in clusters of yellow-grey sacs that glow dimly when squeezed or bruised. The flesh is rubbery, wet, and unpleasantly warm. It is commonly rendered into lamp gels, low-grade glow compounds, and visibility tinctures used for marking paths, signs, and thresholds in the dark.

Mire-Reed Pith
Rarity: **Common** (+10 Foraging)
Harvested from the thick inner cores of Limbo's black marsh reeds, this pith is stringy, pale, and packed with bitter moisture. It dries into a fibrous, absorbent material prized in alchemical filtering, smoke-mixture binding, and crude field dressings. It is often the quiet backbone of far more dangerous concoctions.

Moonmilk Slime
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
Found along cave walls, cisterns, tunnel mouths, and deep ruin-cellars, Moonmilk Slime is a pale, chalky seepage with a soft curd-like consistency and a pearl sheen in lamplight. It is cool to the touch and mildly caustic when fresh. Alchemists prize it for polishing compounds, neutralizing washes, and suspension bases for delicate tinctures.

Palebite Ivy
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
This white-veined crawling ivy clings to walls, doorframes, and submerged masonry, always seeming slightly colder than the surrounding stone. Its leaves are waxy and leave a numbing tingle when torn. In alchemy it is used sparingly for chill compounds, nerve-deadening salves, and preparations intended to dull pain or reduce swelling.

Pale Widow Pearl
Rarity: **Very Rare** (-20 Foraging)
These tiny bead-like nodules form in the throats of certain Limbo marsh-snails and occasionally wash up in black silt beds after floods. They are milky white with a blue sheen and feel unnaturally cold. Ground into powder, they are used in anti-venoms, purity draughts, and expensive clarifying elixirs meant to counteract taint, spoilage, or strange ingestion.

Red Fencap
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
A low fungus with a fleshy red cap and cream-colored underside, Red Fencap often grows in rings around stagnant pools or rotted stumps. When cut, it bleeds a rusty fluid that stains cloth and skin. It is commonly used in blood-staunching pastes, heat tonics, and alchemical binders for aggressive stimulants.

Riftblossom
Rarity: **Very Rare** (-20 Foraging)
Riftblossom grows near unstable boundaries, broken doorways, collapsed shrines, and places where the world has been stitched badly. The flower is thin-petaled and colorless at first glance, but flashes with hidden hues when moved. It is one of the most prized and dangerous ingredients in Limbo, used in portal-sensing tinctures, boundary salts, dream-crossing brews, and volatile occult suspensions that should never be mixed casually.

Salt-Bloom Thistle
Rarity: **Common** (+10 Foraging)
A chalk-white thorn plant that grows from

cracked ground around dried pools and old spill basins, Salt-Bloom Thistle bears brittle stems and a powdery crown. Its crushed body produces a stinging, mineral-rich residue. It is often used in drying agents, irritants, wound-washes, and the first stages of corrosive suspensions.

Sootpetal
Rarity: **Common** (+10 Foraging)
Sootpetal is a black flower with velvety petals that leave charcoal smears on the fingers. It grows in ash beds, grave-fires, and old kiln-fields where the soil still remembers heat. Distilled properly, it becomes a useful ingredient in calming draughts, sleep mixtures, and smoke-darkening compounds.

Starrot Bulb
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
A pale swollen bulb found beneath dream-blighted ground, Starrot Bulb is speckled with faint blue-white lights under its skin like trapped stars seen through milk. It smells sweet, then wrong. It is used in hallucination brews, sight-opening tinctures, and dangerous visionary preparations best handled by those with more nerve than wisdom.

Veilcap Spores
Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
Veilcap is a translucent mushroom that grows in clusters near dream-thin places, half-flooded chapels, and old thresholds that no longer lead where they should. Its spores drift in silver veils when disturbed. These spores are used in sleep draughts, dream elixirs, trance smokes, and unstable preparations tied to memory, visions, or suggestibility.

1. **Weeping Ironvine**
   Rarity: **Rare** (-10 Foraging)
   This black creeping vine grows across ruined gates, drowned chains, and old anchors, bleeding reddish mineral droplets that harden like rust tears. The vine itself is tough and metallic to the touch. Alchemists gather the droplets for strengthening suspensions, mineral tonics, and compounds that toughen paste, glue, or crude armor lacquer.

Widow's Lichen
Rarity: **Uncommon** (+0 Foraging)
A hanging silver lichen found draped over dead branches, grave-fences, and leaning stone markers, Widow's Lichen shivers even when the air is still. It dries to a crisp threadlike texture. It is widely used in clarifying infusions, anti-fever draughts, and mixtures meant to calm tremors, panic, or unnatural agitation.

CHAPTER 15: ALCHEMICAL RECIPES

Below is a set of **alchemical recipes** built from the Limbo forage list, intended for use with the **Alchemy** skill. These are written as practical field and workshop preparations rather than formal spell-work. Some are medicinal, some defensive, some noxious, some occult, and some exist because someone in Limbo looked at a natural hazard and decided to improve it.

In play, the Creepmaster should usually call for an **Alchemy** test when a character attempts to brew, distill, refine, or safely combine these substances under pressure. A clean workspace, proper heat, intact vessels, and known formulae should grant Advantage or a favorable modifier. Poor tools, field mixing, unstable ingredients, contamination, or haste should impose Disadvantage or harsher modifiers. Unless otherwise noted, each recipe produces **one dose, vial, packet, or usable application** on a success.

Alchemical Recipes of Limbo

Ashen Smother-Powder

Ingredients: Ashcap Shelf-Mold, Hollowseed Pods, Salt-Bloom Thistle
Form: Grey choking powder
Use: Thrown, poured into flame, or packed into a snap-vial

This dusty compound blossoms into a thick choking cloud when broken or scattered. It deadens clean air, stings the throat, and turns a neat room into a poor place to breathe and a worse place to fight.

Game Effect:
Creates a short-lived cloud in a small area. Creatures inside or attacking through it usually suffer **Disadvantage** on sight-based actions. The Creepmaster may also call for an **Endurance** or similar resist test to avoid coughing, gagging, or losing a moment of action.

Blackbone Restorative Broth

Ingredients: Blackbone Truffle, Knuckleroot, Grave-Moss
Form: Thick restorative broth or reduction
Use: Consumed during a Rest Break

This earthy, marrow-rich preparation tastes better than many things in Limbo and is therefore immediately suspicious. It rebuilds strength, eases shock, and gives the body something useful to remember while it attempts to remain alive.

Game Effect:
During a Rest Break, the drinker restores complete hunger, and gains **+10** to a Medicine or other recovery-related test, depending on the structure of the scene.

Bogglass Clarifier

Ingredients: Bogglass Beads, Moonmilk Slime, Widow's Lichen
Form: Fine filtering slurry
Use: Added during refinement or used to purify tainted liquids

A patient alchemist uses this cloudy suspension to pull impurities out of tinctures, preserve delicate mixtures, and salvage half-ruined brews. It is also useful for making dubious water merely unpleasant rather than fatal.

Game Effect:
When used during preparation, it grants **+10** to the Alchemy test for making another medicinal, curative, or occult recipe. It may also purify one tainted liquid well enough to drink, though especially foul or cursed sources may still require a further test.

Bogmaw Corrosive

Ingredients: Salt-Bloom Thistle, Corpse-Lily Resin, Ghostfen Nettle, Bogglass Beads
Form: Thick sour-smelling corrosive
Use: Poured onto locks, restraints, bars, hinges, or armor fittings

This ugly pale slurry fizzes on contact and has no respect for ownership. It is not subtle, but it is often faster than a key.

Game Effect:
Applied to a small object or barrier, it grants **+10** on tests to break, weaken, dissolve, or force through non-living material such as locks, bindings, hinges, or fragile fittings. If used offensively, a target may suffer **1d4 damage** plus gear damage at Creepmaster discretion.

Cinder Pollen Flash Charge

Ingredients: Cinder Pollen, Bogglass Beads, Salt-Bloom Thistle
Form: Spark powder in a sealed paper twist or ceramic snap capsule
Use: Thrown, snapped, or ignited

This hot orange powder exists to produce abrupt light, heat, shock, and regret. It is a battlefield irritant, escape tool, and saboteur's favorite answer to the question, "How do I make everyone blink at once?"

Game Effect:
On use, creates a bright flash in a small area. Creatures looking toward the burst must resist with an appropriate test or suffer **Disadvantage** on their next action due to momentary blindness, shock, or disorientation. Flammable materials may also catch.

Cinderfog Fireburst Gel

Ingredients: Cinder Pollen, Lanternbladder Fungus, Heartfire Orchid
Form: Sticky volatile gel
Use: Hurled in a vial, smeared on a surface, or ignited after application

This bright orange gel is beloved by saboteurs, arsonists, and everyone who insists they only use it responsibly. It clings, ignites fast, and makes an immediate mess of both calm and architecture.

Game Effect:
On ignition, deals **1d4 damage** in a small burst or to one primary target, and may set nearby flammable material alight. Targets directly struck may need to spend their next action smothering flame or suffer continued fiction-level burning consequences, at the Creepmaster's discretion.

Corpse-Lily Preserving Wax

Ingredients: Corpse-Lily Resin, Ashcap Shelf-Mold, Hollow Amber
Form: Amber-grey sealing wax
Use: Seals ingredients, vials, herbs, flesh samples, or prepared compounds

This wax is foul to smell but excellent at keeping delicate or volatile ingredients from going bad too quickly. Field alchemists, grave-robbers, and anyone with more ingredients than good refrigeration rely on it.

Game Effect:
A preparation sealed with this wax lasts significantly longer in travel conditions. The Creepmaster may allow a preserved recipe, herb bundle, or delicate sample to remain usable for an extra session, journey, or downtime interval where it would otherwise spoil.

Dream-Leech Distillate

Ingredients: Dream-Leech Vine, Veilcap Spores, Widow's Lichen
Form: Thin blue-grey sedative
Use: Administered carefully by sip, drop, or incense reduction

This distillate softens the edge of vivid dreaming, drains excess dream-pressure, and helps separate true rest from invasive dream-work. It is valued by those who travel too often through bad sleep, haunted memory, or dream-soaked territory.

Game Effect:
Grants **+10** on tests to resist dream intrusion, magical sleep manipulation, nightmare effects, or dream-borne confusion. It may also be used to calm a target suffering from dream-shock, vision overload, or lingering trance effects.

Drowned Mint Clarity Tonic

Ingredients: Drowned Mint, Widow's Lichen, Bogglass Beads
Form: Sharp green draught
Use: Swallowed before examination, study, or careful work

This tonic cuts through nausea, foul air, and mental dullness long enough to let the user think cleanly for a little while. It is popular with occultists, medics, and those who insist on reading old inscriptions in terrible places.

Game Effect:
Grants **+10** on one **Intellect**, **Lore**, **Awareness**, or **Alchemy** test involving concentration, study, examination, or precise judgment.

Ghostfen Coldwash

Ingredients: Ghostfen Nettle, Palebite Ivy, Moonmilk Slime
Form: Frigid liquid wash
Use: Applied to skin, cloth, blades, or traps

This painfully cold wash leaves a thin invisible sting wherever it dries. It is used in numbing contact preparations, alertness shocks, and trap-coatings that punish bare skin and careless handling.

Game Effect:
A coated surface or simple trap causes a target to suffer a sudden cold-sting effect. This usually imposes **Disadvantage** on the next fine-motor or concentration-based action if the target fails an appropriate resist test. It may also wake, shock, or rouse a creature from stupor.

Grave-Moss Poultice

Ingredients: Grave-Moss, Mire-Reed Pith, Drowned Mint
Form: Damp wrapped poultice
Use: Applied to a wounded body during a Rest Break or in immediate field care

This cool, bitter-smelling poultice draws heat from swollen flesh, slows bleeding, and takes the angry edge off fresh hurt. It is one of the most common restorative preparations made by competent hedge-workers, trackers, and patrol medics in Limbo.

Game Effect:
When applied to a recently injured target, the poultice grants **+10** to a Medicine or other test related to stabilizing, tending, or preventing a worsening injury, as appropriate to the scene, and be cured of all suffered poisons. A creature may benefit from only **one Grave-Moss Poultice per Rest Break**.

Heartfire Tonic

Ingredients: Heartfire Orchid, Red Fencap, Knuckleroot
Form: Thick crimson stimulant
Use: Drunk before combat, exertion, or desperate effort

This infamous tonic sets the pulse racing, clears hesitation, and drives the body hard for a short span. It is useful, unsubtle, and dangerous in the way many useful things in Limbo are dangerous: it asks the body to pay later for what it wants now.

Game Effect:
For one scene, gain **+10** on **Might**, **Endurance**, or aggression-driven tests, including breaking, charging, forcing, or continuing through strain. When the effect ends, the user must succeed on an appropriate test or become winded, shaky, or suffer **Disadvantage** on the next exertion-based action.

Hollow Amber Spirit Varnish

Ingredients: Hollow Amber, Corpse-Lily Resin, Veilcap Spores
Form: Golden cloudy varnish
Use: Painted onto charms, vessels, masks, ritual objects, or warded surfaces

This viscous varnish is prized by careful occult workers, who use it to preserve symbolic integrity, strengthen prepared objects, and help a treated item hold its purpose a little longer in the face of spiritual interference.

Game Effect:
An object treated with this varnish gains **+10** to any test or use involving its role in ritual, warding, preservation, or spiritual containment. The Creepmaster may also rule that a fragile occult object survives one instance of magical stress it would otherwise fail.

Hollowseed Smoke-Vial

Ingredients: Hollowseed Pods, Sootpetal, Lanternbladder Fungus
Form: Glass smoke-vial
Use: Thrown or smashed underfoot

A favorite of scouts, thieves, and sensible cowards, this vial bursts into a low bitter smoke with a faint sickly glow at its center. It does not conceal perfectly, but it gives better odds than empty air.

Game Effect:
Creates a small smoke cloud for a brief scene interval. Creatures attacking through it or trying to track movement within it usually suffer **Disadvantage**,

while creatures fleeing, hiding, or repositioning through it may gain +10 on relevant tests.

Ironvine Strength Lacquer

Ingredients: Weeping Ironvine, Corpse-Lily Resin, Moonmilk Slime
Form: Dark mineral lacquer
Use: Brushed onto leather, wood, hide, light shields, or tools

This reddish-black lacquer dries into a hard glossy coat that reinforces surfaces and helps them endure impact, scraping, and damp corruption. It is especially useful in Limbo, where weather, water, and bad handling conspire against all possessions equally.

Game Effect:
One weapon, shield, armor piece, or tool treated with this lacquer may ignore the first fictionally minor breakage, soak, or deterioration result it would otherwise suffer. At the Creepmaster's discretion, it may also grant +10 on a relevant test involving durability or rough use.

Knuckleroot Stimulant

Ingredients: Knuckleroot, Red Fencap, Drowned Mint
Form: Bitter tonic or chewable paste
Use: Swallowed before strain, pursuit, or prolonged exertion

This harsh preparation tastes like boiled bark and medicinal spite. It sharpens the body, deadens minor aches, and helps a tired creature continue moving after common sense has filed its objections.

Game Effect:
For one scene, gain +10 on tests involving endurance, forced movement, hauling, resisting fatigue, or pushing through pain. When the effect ends, the Creepmaster may impose **Disadvantage** on the next test involving exhaustion or composure if the user has badly overextended themself.

Lanternbladder Gel

Ingredients: Lanternbladder Fungus, Ashcap Shelf-Mold, Corpse-Lily Resin
Form: Sticky glow-gel in a sealed tin or vial
Use: Smeared on surfaces, thrown in small amounts, or used to mark trails

This clammy yellow gel glows dimly for hours once exposed to air. It is used by ruin-delvers, tunnel scouts, and anyone who would rather not get lost in a place where being lost becomes a theological problem.

Game Effect:
Creates a small steady light source or marks a path, object, doorway, or creature with visible glow. Hidden or disguised objects marked with the gel are usually easier to track or relocate, granting +10 to relevant Awareness or Tracking tests where light and visibility matter.

Marsh-Hush Scent Breaker

Ingredients: Mire-Reed Pith, Ashcap Shelf-Mold, Drowned Mint, Ghostfen Nettle
Form: Muddy green paste or rubbed powder
Use: Smeared on boots, clothing, harness, or skin

This preparation suppresses body scent, dampens foot-smell, and confuses ordinary trail-reading long enough to make pursuit more difficult. Trackers hate it when used against them and love it when they remember to prepare it first.

Game Effect:
Grants +10 on tests to avoid being tracked by scent, to move without leaving strong animal spoor, or to

conceal a recent trail from natural pursuit. It is especially effective in wetlands, rain, mud, and heavily vegetated terrain.

Moonmilk Neutral Wash

Ingredients: Moonmilk Slime, Pale Widow Pearl, Drowned Mint
Form: Milky cleansing wash
Use: Poured over skin, tools, wounds, or contaminated surfaces

This cool white wash strips residue from metal, skin, and cloth, and is one of the best general-purpose anti-taint preparations a competent Limbo alchemist can carry. It is not a cure for everything, but it is a fine way to avoid becoming part of the problem.

Game Effect:
Grants **+10** on tests to cleanse poison residue, remove irritants, neutralize minor alchemical contamination, or safely handle tainted materials. It may also cancel a minor ongoing irritation or exposure effect at the Creepmaster's discretion.

Palebite Numbing Salve

Ingredients: Palebite Ivy, Grave-Moss, Moonmilk Slime
Form: White-blue ointment
Use: Applied to flesh, bruises, bites, or inflamed wounds

This cold salve deadens pain and reduces swelling, though overuse can leave the skin unnervingly numb. It is valuable when a character must keep functioning through discomfort rather than collapse for proper care.

Game Effect:
For one scene, the user gains **+10** on tests to ignore pain, hold steady through injury, or perform delicate action despite a minor wound. It does not restore damage, but it can help keep a wounded character operational.

Pale Widow Antivenom

Ingredients: Pale Widow Pearl, Moonmilk Slime, Widow's Lichen
Form: Fine white suspension
Use: Swallowed or injected through a hollow thorn or narrow tube

This expensive, carefully prepared suspension is among the most reliable anti-venoms an alchemist can make from Limbo forage. It has a bitter shell-taste and leaves the lips slightly numb.

Game Effect:
Grants **+10** on a test to resist venom, poison, or toxic ingestion, or may be used after exposure to cancel, reduce, or shorten a minor poison effect. Against especially strong toxins, it may allow a second resist test where none would otherwise be offered.

Red Fencap Coagulant

Ingredients: Red Fencap, Grave-Moss, Salt-Bloom Thistle
Form: Thick blood-dark paste
Use: Pressed into a wound or spread over torn flesh

This sticky paste burns on contact, which is often how one knows it is working. It staunches bleeding quickly and is especially valued when proper rest or full treatment is not yet possible.

Game Effect:
Immediately halts ordinary bleeding and grants **+10** on tests to stabilize an injured target. If used promptly after injury, it may also prevent an escalating harm

consequence the Creepmaster was considering applying.

Riftblossom Threshold Serum

Ingredients: Riftblossom, Bogglass Beads, Drowned Mint
Form: Clear iridescent serum
Use: Swallowed, dabbed beneath the eyes, or brushed across the temples

This is one of the most valuable and dangerous non-sorcerous preparations commonly whispered about in Limbo. For a brief span, it sharpens the user's awareness of boundaries, hidden doors, unstable crossings, folded space, and places where the world is about to behave badly.

Game Effect:
For one scene, gain **+10** on tests to detect portals, hidden thresholds, unstable boundaries, dream-thin spaces, or spatial anomalies. The Creepmaster should also offer one extra clue when such a feature is nearby. A failed Alchemy test when brewing this recipe may produce unstable results.

Starrot Vision Elixir

Ingredients: Starrot Bulb, Veilcap Spores, Drowned Mint
Form: Blue-white cloudy elixir
Use: Swallowed only by the brave, the foolish, or the sufficiently paid

This elixir peels the edge of ordinary sight back just far enough to reveal that ordinary sight was a courtesy to begin with. It sharpens perception of occult traces, hidden seams, emotional residue, and dream-tainted wrongness, but it is not gentle.

Game Effect:
For one scene, gain **+10** on tests to perceive magical traces, dream-distortion, hidden spiritual residue, or subtle unreality. The Creepmaster may also volunteer one additional disturbing or useful perception. After the effect ends, the user may suffer **Disadvantage** on the next composure, fear, or clarity-related test.

Veilcap Dream-Draught

Ingredients: Veilcap Spores, Drowned Mint, Widow's Lichen
Form: Pale silver sleeping tincture
Use: Swallowed, poured into drink, or administered carefully

This is one of Limbo's more infamous controlled preparations: a soft, silvery draught that draws the mind toward sleep, trance, and the dangerous edge between rest and dream-interference. Used carefully, it is therapeutic. Used carelessly, it is a crime, a ritual mistake, or both.

Game Effect:
A willing target gains **+10** on a test related to sleep, dream-entry, calming the mind, or enduring dream-pressure. An unwilling or unsuspecting target must succeed on an appropriate resist test or become drowsy, sluggish, or briefly sleep-bound, as the Creepmaster judges appropriate to the dose and situation.

Widow's Quiet Draught

Ingredients: Widow's Lichen, Sootpetal, Drowned Mint
Form: Thin grey calming liquid
Use: Swallowed or administered slowly to a distressed target

This draught is favored in camps, infirmaries, and anxious little watch-posts where panic spreads faster than good sense. It calms trembling, slows racing breath, and helps settle bodies and minds that are trying to come apart.

Game Effect:
Grants **+10** on a test to resist fear, panic, magical unease, or emotional spiraling. It may also remove a minor fiction-level trembling, agitation, or shock condition if the Creepmaster judges the scene allows it.

CHAPTER 16: PORTALS, GATES & THRESHOLDS

Portals are the doors by which worlds inconvenience one another.

In **CREEPS!**, portals are not all alike, and treating them as if they were is one of the faster ways to end up in the wrong place with the wrong company and a story no one believes afterward. Some portals are obvious: glowing seams in old stone, humming doorframes, archways filled with silver fog, closet doors that open onto warmth that is not the room beyond, or tunnels where the air bends and the light goes thoughtful. Others are subtle enough to escape notice entirely until something uses them. A portal may look like a proper threshold, a curtain of wrong light, a crack in space, a familiar door behaving too patiently, or nothing at all beyond a sudden change in pressure, sound, or dream-feel.

Most known portals are old, stable enough to matter, and already cataloged by the Vigil, shrine authorities, route-keepers, or anyone else with the administrative stamina to write down where reality keeps cheating. These are the practical thresholds of the setting: maintained routes, watched crossings, licensed passages, and problem doors with enough history to have earned a file. But Limbo is not limited to what has already been measured. New portals can form anywhere, anytime, especially where emotion, dream pressure, symbolic weakness, magical stress, or repeated crossing have worn the world thin. A child's room, a flooded tunnel, a burned shrine, an abandoned hallway, a root-wrapped cellar, a theater dressing mirror, a boiler room door no one uses anymore—any of these may become a threshold if the right wrong forces lean hard enough in the same direction.

Limbo is the realm most commonly linked to portals because Limbo is, in many ways, a realm of portals. It is a crossroads, a pressure zone, a knot of roads between roads. Many thresholds open into Limbo first, or through Limbo, before leading elsewhere. Some open directly into known regions, tunnels, districts, or route halls. Others spill into Astral tunnels, dream-thin channels, or liminal stretches that must be crossed before a traveler reaches any true destination. And some portals are highly specific in behavior. Human World closet doors, for example, are among the most iconic and consistent threshold types in the setting: when active, they lead directly to Human World closets rather than to random astral drift, which is both useful and the source of an unreasonable amount of trouble.

A **Gate** is different. A Gate is not a naturally formed or persistent portal, but a **temporary threshold created by a person using magic**. Gates are deliberate, unstable, and usually short-lived unless reinforced through ritual, anchoring, or very bad decision-making. Where a portal is discovered, inherited, mapped, or survived, a Gate is made.

The wise learn quickly that every threshold deserves respect. Some are roads. Some are wounds. Some are invitations. Some are mistakes. And some are all four at once.

Portal Types

Not all portals are built alike, and Limbo would be a much quieter place if they were.

Some thresholds behave with the decency of a proper door: they open in a recognizable place, lead where experience says they ought to lead, and remain stable long enough for maps, patrols, tariffs, and bad field jokes to accumulate around them. Others behave like reality losing interest in consistency. A portal may look like an ordinary domestic doorway until opened at the wrong hour, or shimmer in open air like heat over glass, or appear only in reflection, root-shadow, stormlight, or dream-pressure. Some are permanent enough to be cataloged, fortified, and fought over. Others flare into being for an evening, a season, or a single memorable mistake.

The following threshold types are among the best known in Limbo lore, Vigil records, and field experience. None should be assumed safe merely because they are familiar.

Closet Door Portal

The most iconic of all Human World thresholds, a Closet Door Portal links Limbo directly to a human child's closet or bedroom-adjacent domestic space. These portals are intimate, emotionally charged, and often tied to sleep, fear, imagination, and the strange symbolic gravity that gathers around childhood private spaces. Some are stable for years. Others flicker with mood, trauma, or dream activity. A Closet Door Portal is often physically ordinary until the moment it isn't, which is exactly the sort of disrespectful behavior Limbo has come to expect from architecture.

Mirror Portal

A Mirror Portal forms when a reflective surface stops behaving like a reflection and starts behaving like an invitation. Mirrors, dark window glass, polished silver, still water, and even camera lenses can serve as such thresholds under the right circumstances. These portals are especially dangerous because they often appear as sight before they become passage. A viewer may see the other side long before they realize they can step through it—or that something else can step out.

Crack-in-Stone

This threshold appears as a thin glowing fissure in rock, cave wall, ruined masonry, or old foundational stone. A Crack-in-Stone often leads somewhere wild, unstable, or poorly mapped, and should never be mistaken for a civilized route simply because it is narrow. These portals are common in older caverns, fractured tunnel systems, and places where deep pressure, old magic, or forgotten geography have worn the world thin. They are notorious among scouts, salvage crews, and people who enjoy finding out too late that "unknown realm" was not poetic wording.

Fey Knot

A Fey Knot looks less like a door than a song made visible. It may appear as a spiral of drifting light, leaves moving in impossible patterns, threads of color turning in the air, or a soft knot of glamour that seems more heard than seen. These thresholds open toward faerie domains, green courts, hidden groves, and all the other elegant problems associated with the fair folk. Fey Knots often respond poorly to blunt force, bureaucracy, and ordinary impatience.

Fire Shimmer

This threshold appears as wavering air, furnace-light, or a curtain of heat distortion thick enough to suggest shape behind it. Fire Shimmers commonly lead to volcanic domains, ember caverns, infernal reaches, or any place where heat has become both landscape and philosophy. They are often found near kilns, lava seams, burned shrines, forge halls, and collapsed

heat-routes. One should never assume that a Fire Shimmer leads somewhere merely hot. Some of them lead somewhere judgmental as well.

Water Ripple

A Water Ripple Portal forms in the surface of standing water, slow-moving water, marsh pools, flooded tunnels, canals, lake edges, or even a well-kept bath if the setting is feeling especially impolite. These thresholds connect to lakes, wetlands, underground rivers, drowned ruins, and oceanic or marsh-bound realms. Some are smooth and still. Others pulse like something breathing beneath the surface. They are beautiful in the way many lethal things are beautiful.

Root Hollow

A Root Hollow opens behind old trees, giant roots, moss-wrapped hollows, fungal trunk chambers, or root-tangled wall wounds. These thresholds are common in forested regions, under-root routes, and domains shared uneasily with fae, old spirits, and things that think wood counts as architecture. They often smell of loam, rain, bark, and old memory. Root Hollows are among the oldest known threshold types, and many of them resent being treated like recent discoveries.

Stormgate

A Stormgate manifests as an electrical distortion: a curtain of static, blue-white crackling air, a standing thunderhead in miniature, or a sudden vertical split in space full of wind and charge. These portals lead toward elemental air domains, storm-realms, lightning reaches, and high volatile skies where footing is often an act of faith rather than engineering. Stormgates are dramatic, loud, and extremely unpopular with people carrying metal.

Shadow Stitch

A Shadow Stitch appears where darkness has been joined too neatly. It may look like a seam between two shadows, a vertical line of blackness in a wall, a fold in the dark beneath a bed, or a patch of shadow that has begun pretending to depth. These thresholds commonly lead to shadow realms, nightmare corridors, or bleak liminal places where fear and distance are close relatives. They are especially dangerous because they often appear in ordinary spaces and can remain unnoticed until already in use.

Astral Window

An Astral Window is both view and passage. It may appear as a hanging pane of impossible stars, a silver aperture in space, a circular viewing surface, or an opening through which distant Astral realms can be seen long before entry is attempted. Some remain only observational unless activated. Others allow immediate crossing. Astral Windows are among the most seductive threshold types, because they invite looking first and caution later.

Human Public Door

This is one of Limbo's more embarrassing threshold failures. A Human Public Door portal forms when an ordinary modern doorway—a school hall door, office entrance, mall service door, apartment corridor access, or even a bus-stop shelter panel—accidentally connects to Limbo or another threshold route. These are rarely intended, often unstable, and produce the exact kind of witnesses the Vigil least enjoys paperwork about. They are proof that modern human architecture is fully capable of being haunted by logistics.

Ancient Gate

An Ancient Gate is not a casual threshold. It is a permanent, usually large, often monumental crossing

point built, shaped, or stabilized intentionally by cultures old enough to think in centuries. These gates are commonly framed in worked stone, metal, crystal, root architecture, or ritual geometry and may be fortified, cataloged, shrine-kept, or heavily guarded. Some remain among the safest major crossings in existence. Others have been breached, corrupted, half-lost, or left functioning just well enough to be everybody's problem. When an Ancient Gate goes wrong, it tends to do so at scale.

No matter the type, every portal shares one truth: it is not merely a road. It is a relationship between places. Some such relationships are healthy. Some are profitable. Some are ancient. And some are the sort a sensible traveler enters only after checking their lantern, their luck, and whether anyone they trust has already come back out.

PORTAL ALERTS & THREAT CLASSIFICATION

How the Vigil identifies dangers and dispatches Cohorts

Every Portal maintained or monitored by the Vigil is equipped with a series of **runic sigils, lantern-anchors, and sensory stones** that react to fluctuations in dimensional stability, unnatural passage, or unauthorized movement.

These disturbances appear to Vigil members simply as **Alerts**.

Alerts represent the most common way Creeps encounter danger.
They come in three primary forms:

- **Trespassers**
- **Truants**
- **Invaders**

Each threat category determines:

- urgency
- cohort response type
- protocols
- required reports
- danger level

WHAT IS AN ALERT?

An **Alert** is a warning emitted by a Vigil portal ward—usually a rune, lantern, detection crystal, or portal-chain marker—indicating that something has **approached, touched, tampered with, or passed through** a portal.

Alerts come in three levels:

Level 1 — Minor Disruption

- flickering runes
- soft vibrations
- weak astral shimmer
  Usually the sign of:
  • small animals
  • sleepwalkers
  • dream residue
  • minor Trespassers

Level 2 — Active Disturbance

- portal partially awakens
- temperature drops
- shadows move incorrectly
  Indicates:
  • aggressive Trespasser
  • Truant attempt
  • small Invader scouting

Level 3 — Full Breach Attempt

- portal opens without command
- wards strain or crack

- screeching tones / magical recoil
  Indicates:
  • multiple entities
  • aggressive Invasion
  • dimensional turbulence

Level 3 Alerts are extremely rare—usually fewer than a dozen per year across all Limbo.

TRESSPASSERS

"Unauthorized visitors that aren't always hostile... but often confused."

Definition:
A **Trespasser** is *any being* that crosses into a portal without permission, intention, or proper authority.

This includes:

- curious children
- lost dream-forms
- minor spirits
- house pets
- wandering fey
- unaware humans
- accidental step-throughs

Threat Profile: Low to Moderate

Most Trespassers are harmless but unpredictable.

Portal Signs of Trespassers:

- light flickers rhythmically
- runes pulse but remain intact
- draft carries a scent or faint melodic shift
- footprints appear near the frame

Creep Cohort Duties:

1. **Confirm presence**
2. **Document Trespasser type**
3. **Identify if sentient or confused**
4. **Return them safely or monitor departure**
5. **File a T-1 (Trespass) Report** with the Vigil

Common Encounters:

- A child sleepwalking into Limbo briefly
- A cat chasing shadows through a closet portal
- A fey insect following a light pattern
- A human dropping something through accidentally

Trespassers are rarely dangerous, but they can cause **portal instability** if they linger.

TRUANTS

"Citizens of Limbo who deliberately go through portals they shouldn't."

Definition:
A **Truant** is a resident of Limbo who uses, enters, or tampers with a portal **without authorization**, usually for:

- curiosity
- mischief
- petty crime
- thrill-seeking
- forbidden exploration

Threat Profile: Low to High (depending on intent)

A Truant may be harmless or may cause a diplomatic incident by intruding into:

- restricted human spaces
- dream Passages
- sacred Doors

- other Creep families' territories
- ancient portals

Portal Signs of Truants:

- sharp rune distortions
- scuff marks near frame
- personal effects left behind
- echoes of giggling or whispered songs
- damaged hinges or stressed portal chains

Creep Cohort Duties:

1. **Locate and retrieve** the Truant
2. **Assess whether they caused damage**
3. **Determine motive (malicious or foolish)**
4. **Escort them back to Limbo**
5. **Issue a T-2 (Truant) Return Notice**
6. **Submit them for discipline** if required

Common Truant Types:

- mischievous spindle-limbers
- teenaged burrowfolk testing boundaries
- curious arcane-blooded who "felt a calling"
- feral-frame youths chasing prey into portals

Truants can be problematic—especially when they enter dangerous Human World locations.

INVADERS

"Hostile forces that deliberately attempt to breach Limbo's borders."

Definition:
An **Invader** is any individual or group that enters or attempts to enter Limbo with **harmful, destructive, or exploitative intent**.

Invaders may come from:

- the Human World
- corrupted dream-layers
- necrotic spirit realms
- other dimensional pockets
- dark fey courts
- infernal sources

Threat Profile: Moderate to Catastrophic

Types of Invaders:

- rogue conjurers
- undead forces seeking refuge
- demonic scouting parties
- cult agents
- sorcerers seeking Limbo resources
- dream-world predators

Portal Signs of Invaders:

- sudden temperature changes
- violent flaring of runes
- portal creaking or cracking
- voices or chanting
- objects moving on their own
- shadow distortion independent of light

Creep Cohort Duties:

1. **Assess numerically** (how many)
2. **Identify classification** (undead, mortal, fey, etc.)
3. **Delay or halt progress**
4. **Call for reinforcements**

5. **Secure the portal**
6. **File an I-1 (Invasion Attempt) or I-2 (Confirmed Invasion) Report**

Invasion Threat Responses:

- **Single Cohort Response (SCR):** Level 2, small force
- **Multi-Cohort Deployment (MCD):** Level 3
- **Vigil Summoning:** if ancient or infernal invaders

Invaders represent the greatest threat to Limbo's safety.

THE ALERT LADDER

Alert Level	Signal	Most Likely Threat	Action
1	Flicker	Trespasser	Investigate + document
2	Rune distortion	Truant/minor Invader	Secure + assess
3	Portal breach	Major Invader	Reinforce + contain

CHAPTER 17: QUIETING THE REALM

A Cohort does not only survive Limbo. Sometimes it must help keep the place from coming apart.

Quiet the Realm (QTR) efforts are organized actions taken by the Cohort to reduce panic, stabilize disorder, calm spiritual pressure, contain a bad breach, restore confidence, or keep a district, route, or settlement from slipping into open crisis. They are not usually full adventures by themselves, though they can become them quickly. They are the hard practical work of making things less broken than they were a moment ago.

A Quiet the Realm effort should always be tied to a visible problem already in motion: a **Heat** Clock rising in the Lantern Streets, a **Pursuit** Clock after something ugly escaped into the tunnels, a **Morale** Clock among refugees or followers, a **Portal Instability** Clock near a bad threshold, a **Dream Pressure** Clock around a nightmare-tainted route, or a **Supply** Clock in a cut-off settlement. The Cohort is not making a vague "calm everything down" roll. It is taking focused action to buy back order through leadership, labor, ritual, medicine, planning, or plain grim competence.

How Quiet the Realm Tests Work

Most Quiet the Realm efforts are **Presence-driven** in tone, because they depend on projecting calm, confidence, authority, and emotional steadiness into a bad situation. That does **not** mean Presence is added to a skill value. The roll is always made against **one relevant skill**, modified by the fiction as normal.

Use the following procedure:

1. Name the crisis.
Decide what the Cohort is trying to quiet: panic, unrest, dream leakage, sickness, bad morale, portal strain, or some other active danger.

2. Choose the Lead Protagonist.
One Protagonist takes the lead and makes the decisive test.

3. Choose the method.
The Lead states how they are trying to restore order.

4. Choose the skill.
Roll against the most relevant skill. Common choices include:

- **Command** to direct, organize, or impose order
- **Persuasion** to reassure, calm, or win trust
- **Dreamcraft** to steady dream-pressure or nightmare spill
- **Sorcery** or **Lore** to contain magical or occult disruption
- **Medicine** to quiet panic driven by injury, sickness, or shock
- **Survival** to restore control in a route, wilderness, or environmental crisis

5. Apply modifiers.
The Creepmaster applies Advantage or Disadvantage modifiers based on the seriousness of the crisis, local trust or resistance, the Lead's credibility, the tools or rites available, and any help provided by the rest of the Cohort.

6. Roll the test.
Roll **d100** against the modified skill value.

7. Resolve the outcome.
On success, the relevant Clock is reduced, stabilized, or prevented from advancing. On failure, the crisis worsens, shifts, or advances.

Rules Note

When Quiet the Realm uses language like **Command** or **Persuasion**, the roll is made against that **skill**, not against an Attribute plus a skill. Presence matters because it describes the force behind the action and helps the Creepmaster judge modifiers, but it does not add to the target number.

Lead and Support

A Quiet the Realm effort is usually resolved as a **Lead + Support** Cohort action. One Protagonist makes the decisive roll. Other members of the Cohort help through **Setup**, **Contain**, or **Pivot**, using the normal Cohort Play structure.

A support action might:

- grant **+10**
- cancel an equivalent Disadvantage
- reduce fallout if the Lead fails
- create a better option for the next Beat

Support should matter, but the Cohort should not erase risk simply by piling bodies into the scene. A crowd is not the same thing as order.

Suggested Modifiers

Apply these only when the fiction supports them.

Favorable

- **+10** if the Cohort has local trust, clear authority, or official sanction
- **+10** if the problem is narrow, concrete, and immediately manageable
- **+10** if the Lead has a strong prior relationship, the proper tools, or the correct rite

Unfavorable

- **−10** if panic is already spreading or the district is distrustful
- **−10** if the effort is improvised with weak information
- **−20** if the crisis is spiritually active, violent, or symbolically unstable
- **−20** if the Cohort is trying to quiet several problems at once

Cohort Size

More Creeps can help, but only if they are actually organized.

Use this simple rule:

- **1–3 active participants**: no modifier
- **4 or more active participants with clear coordination**: **+10**
- **4 or more active participants without clear coordination**: **−10**

If the Cohort is larger, divide it into meaningful roles rather than treating everyone as helping in the same way. That keeps the scene readable and rewards discipline instead of noise.

Degrees of Outcome

A Quiet the Realm effort should almost always affect a **Clock** or a district condition.

Success

Reduce the relevant Clock by **1 tick**, or prevent its next advance.

Strong Success

On a strong **DoS**, reduce the Clock by **2 ticks**, or reduce it by **1 tick** and gain an additional benefit such as:

- local gratitude
- a temporary safe haven
- useful information
- a named ally or contact
- improved route access
- a brief recovery in morale

Failure

The effort fails to quiet the problem. The relevant Clock advances by **1 tick**, or a new complication appears.

Bad Failure

On a notable **DoF**, the Clock advances by **2 ticks**, or the problem shifts rather than ends:

- panic moves instead of stopping
- the breach stabilizes but leaves residue
- order returns, but blame lands badly
- the district quiets, but the Cohort takes **Heat**, **Debt**, or spiritual stain

Repeated Efforts

The Cohort may attempt more than one Quiet the Realm effort against the same crisis, but each new attempt must change the fiction. A new effort should require at least one of the following:

- a new method
- a new Lead
- new preparation
- a changed scene condition
- or a meaningful cost paid in the meantime

Do not allow repeated empty rerolls until the district behaves. Quieting the Realm should feel like work, not grinding.

Example Uses

Panic in the Closetways

A dream breach has spilled children's fear into a local closet nexus.
The Lead rolls **Dreamcraft** to calm and stabilize the route. Another Creep uses **Command** to organize bystanders, while another uses **Lore** to identify the old threshold marks. On success, reduce the **Dream Pressure** Clock by 1. On a strong success, reduce it by 2 and secure a brief safe route window.

Riot in the Lantern Streets

A false rumor about cursed goods is turning a market ugly.
The Lead rolls **Command** to impose order or **Persuasion** to calm the crowd. One Creep physically contains looters, while another proves the rumor false with **Lore** or **Alchemy**. On success, reduce **Heat** or **Panic** by 1. On failure, the Clock advances and the Vigil arrives irritated.

Bad Air in a Tunnel Settlement

Fungal bloom, sickness, and fear are spreading through a cut-off community.

The Lead rolls **Medicine** to stabilize the living or **Survival** to restore working order to the settlement. Another Creep handles ventilation and supplies, while another keeps people from panicking. On success, reduce **Morale Collapse** or **Sickness** by 1. On a strong success, also establish a temporary refuge or recover trust.

Final Summary

Quiet the Realm is a structured Cohort action used to reduce a dangerous Clock or restore order in a district, route, or settlement. The Lead rolls the most relevant skill. The rest of the Cohort helps through support actions. Most efforts are Presence-driven in tone, but the actual roll is always made against the chosen skill, not against an Attribute plus a skill. Success quiets the problem. Failure sharpens it. In short, this is how a Cohort proves it is more than a wandering knot of nightmares with gear. It is how they become useful to Limbo, at least until the next door opens wrong.

CREEPMASTER'S GUIDE

THE CREEPMASTER

Every game needs someone to open the wrong door on purpose.

In **CREEPS!**, that someone is the **Creepmaster**. The title is specific to the setting, but the role itself is not new. The Creepmaster is simply this book's name for what the **One-on-One RPG** core rules call the **Director**. The duties are the same. The perspective is the same. The responsibility is the same. Only the name has changed, because **CREEPS!** is a world of lurking little horrors, dream-sick roads, suspicious closets, fungal lanterns, and bad ideas with feet, and "Creepmaster" suits that work better than anything tidy ever could.

The Creepmaster presents the world, portrays its people, frames danger, answers uncertainty, and keeps the story moving with pressure, consequence, and opportunity. In a one-on-one game especially, this role matters enormously. There is no large party to generate momentum through sheer volume of discussion. The Creepmaster must help shape that momentum scene by scene, giving the Protagonist sharp choices, immediate stakes, useful information, and a world that always feels ready to answer what they do next.

In **CREEPS!**, the Creepmaster's work carries a particular flavor. This is not a setting of high heroic certainty or clean moral architecture. It is intimate, strange, often darkly funny, and full of places that feel one breath away from becoming personal. The Creepmaster should lean into that. Limbo is dangerous, but it is rarely empty danger. Its threats have mood, texture, history, and bad timing. A corridor should not merely be a corridor if it can also be a memory trap, a market shortcut, a fungal nursery, a smuggling lane, or the place where something has learned to wait. The same is true of people. A ferryman, shrine keeper, salvage broker, Lantern Street merchant, or Vigil officer should feel like someone living in this world rather than a mouth delivering the next clue.

At the table, the Creepmaster's job is not to defeat the Protagonist. It is to challenge them, surprise them, frighten them occasionally, amuse them when possible, and make their choices matter. That means balancing pressure with possibility. It means letting Limbo feel dangerous without making it shapeless. It means remembering that a one-on-one story lives and dies by focus: the camera stays close, the stakes stay personal, and even the larger mysteries of the setting should touch the Protagonist in ways that feel immediate.

The Creepmaster should also remember what kind of game **CREEPS!** wants to be. It wants tension, wonder, strange beauty, practical survival, and the occasional moment where something unsettling becomes funny precisely because it is so unsettling. It wants dream logic brushing up against hard reality. It wants trade, roads, shrines, salvage, and secrets to matter. It wants the world to feel inhabited. Most of all, it wants the Protagonist to feel small in a way that never means powerless.

That is the Creepmaster's work: to hold the lantern, speak for the dark, and know exactly when to let something rustle behind the coats.

CHAPTER 18: THE WORLD OF LIMBO

THE TRUE AND UNCERTAIN NATURE OF LIMBO

Limbo is a **pocket-reality**, a strange and self-contained half-world that clings to the very edge of the Astral Plane like a barnacle on the side of a ship far too large to notice it. It is **not** the "True Limbo" spoken of in cosmic scripture.

Even the greatest Dream-Scribes and Portal Engineers agree:
Limbo is a mistake that learned how to flourish.

Once, so the legends claim, Limbo was just a **forgotten crack** between worlds where dream-light slipped through and pooled. In time, the crack thickened, hardened, and grew into a **cavernous expanse of soft stone, cool shadows, and unpredictable folds of space** — a comfortable halfway-place for all the odds and ends reality didn't know what to do with.

Those odds and ends?
Creatures like **Creeps**, dream-kissed beings of mismatched limbs, curious eyes, fuzzy hides, feathered brows, or shimmering skin — small folk shaped by the chaotic rules of a place that never wanted a single rule to begin with.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF A PLACE THAT ISN'T SUPPOSED TO HAVE GEOGRAPHY

Limbo is often described as a **colossal underground cavern**, a ceiling so high in some places it disappears, and so low in others it brushes the tops of spires, stalactites, or crooked lamp posts hammered into stone.

Its layout is fractured and inconsistent:

- **Wide hollows**, where entire neighborhoods glow with warm lichen lamps
- **Twisting tunnels**, smooth as river stones
- **Slightly-too-tight squeezeways**, where Creeps shuffle sideways with nervous giggles
- **Sub-caverns the size of grand cities**, each assigned for labor, food production, manufacturing, magical research, or public spaces
- **Stray chambers** that appear overnight and vanish days later
- **Lodged dreams**, which form temporary floating islands of surreal imagery

Limbo defies cartography.
But Creeps, being natural-born problem-solvers, have mapped what they can:

- **The Lower Warrens**: older and more labyrinthine, haunted by forgotten echoes
- **The Lantern Streets**: bright, crowded markets where trade with other cultures happens
- **The Vigilsphere**: the fortified district from which The Vigil organization operates
- **The Closets**: the clusters of small stone corridors that link Limbo to human bedroom closet doors

Yes — that last one is real. Limbo is connected to **every human's closet** (or psychologically equivalent enclosed private space). These access points vary in strength and stability, but they all lead back to Limbo's tangled spiderweb of Portal Chambers.

DREAM PASSAGES: THE LIFEBLOOD OF LIMBO

Dream Passages are **stable portals** forming naturally wherever human (or other beings) imagination and fear are strongest. They have existed longer than Creeps have records. They are always open, always humming, always vulnerable.

Each Dream Passage leads to:

- A child's closet
- A nightmare trench
- A soft-memory haze
- A specific realm or plane
- Or a place between places

The energy that flows through these passages is what **sustains Limbo** — feeding its mushrooms, its strange creatures, and even its people.

But Dream Passages are fragile. A single misplaced ritual, a wrong surge of Astral weather, or a meddling outsider can:

- Distort a corridor
- Warp a chamber
- Unleash a nightmare
- Or tear open a new (and unwanted) opening

This constant instability is why The Vigil exists.

CHAPTER 19: THE VIGIL

THE FOUNDING OF THE VIGIL

Long ago, Limbo began to swell with life, with Creeps populating its calming gloom. But it also started to attract attention: wandering spirits, invading armies, dark priesthoods, stray dream entities, and a trickle of monstrous beings with far too much ambition.

A group of early Creeps — brave, eccentric, partially mad, incredibly determined — forged a pact:

> **"Where portals open, we stand guard.**
> **Where danger spills, we step in.**
> **We watch. We wait. We act.**
> **We are The Vigil."**

They took up spears, lanterns, spellbooks, tools, and enchanted knobs of half-working machinery and stationed themselves at the most dangerous passages. What began as a last stand turned into the first organized protectorate.

In time, The Vigil evolved into:

- A guild
- A paramilitary order
- A civic institution
- A family
- A bureaucratic headache
- And Limbo's most essential organization

THE PURPOSE OF THE VIGIL

The Vigil monitors **all dimensional access points** in and out of Limbo. Their responsibilities fall into three primary categories:

1. Trespasser Events

Individuals or creatures who pass through a portal **without permission**, intentionally or unintentionally.

They might be:

- Lost merchants
- Curious travelers
- Drunk scholars
- Wandering Children
- Magical pets
- Runaway apprentices
- Minor supernatural beings

Trespassers are *usually* harmless — but can become extremely dangerous.

2. Truant Events

Creeps and beings who travel through portals **they are not assigned or trained to use**.

Truants tend to be:

- Mischievous adolescents
- Inventors wanting shortcuts

- Pilferers
- Creep thrill-seekers
- Wayward magicians

The Vigil treats Truant events with sternness, not strict control.

3. Invader Events

Serious threats:
military units, raiding parties, cultists, monsters, dark sorcerers, or nightmare-born horrors entering Limbo with malicious intent.

Invaders may come in:

- Squads
- Packs
- Armies
- Or, worst of all, **choirs** (emotionally resonant dream-enemies)

Invader events represent the highest danger category and mobilize entire Cohorts.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE VIGIL

The High-Lantern Council

Eight elected Vigilants oversee all operations.
They are:

- Old
- Experienced
- Very eccentric
- Extremely protective of Limbo
- Terrible at remembering paperwork deadlines

The Cohorts

Creep teams of 3–6 members assigned to:

- Investigate portal disturbances
- Resolve local conflicts
- Escort visiting diplomats
- Neutralize threats
- Perform repair & engineering work
- Explore new sub-realities
- Patch dream-fractures

Each Cohort has a name, often self-chosen.
(Examples: *The Threadbare Brigade, Lantern 9, Squad Fuzzbolt, Team Whimwhack*.)

The Lantern-Keepers

Specialized personnel who maintain:

- Portal Lamps
- Astral residue detectors
- Dimensional scanners
- Dream stabilizers
- Logic disruptors

The Wardens of the Passages

Frontline defenders stationed in fortified Portal Chambers. They are the first to see something go wrong — and the first to get eaten.

The Archive Branch

Bookish Creeps, Night Schoolers, Scryers, Scriveners. They analyze portal data, catalog artifacts, and spend far too much time arguing about metaphysical margins.

VIGIL TRAINING

Every Creep in The Vigil receives at least basic training:

- Stealth in stone corridors

- Navigation in non-Euclidean spaces
- Combat (melee and/or ranged)
- Handling panic (theirs and others')
- Dream-safety protocols
- Portal-lock and unlock techniques
- Emergency seal procedures

Advancement leads to:

- Specialized training
- Permission to use dangerous tools
- Leadership of Cohorts
- More meetings
- More forms to fill out
- (Sometimes) more hats

THE ROLE OF CREEPS IN THE VIGIL

Creeps are uniquely suited for portal defense because:

1. They're small — less likely to trigger portal collapses
2. Adaptable — their shapes vary and often help in unusual terrain
3. Naturally magical — some have strange talents
4. Fear-resistant — most have seen too much weirdness
5. Emotionally robust — they bounce (sometimes literally)

Limbo's survival depends largely on the **creativity, courage, and chaotic brilliance** of these small guardians.

THE CURRENT ERA: GROWING THREATS

Limbo now faces:

- Increasing portal instability
- More incursions from Emberhearth, Gloomwell, Murkdren, and Thryx
- Rising activity from the **Black Root Coven**
- Mechanized infiltrations by the **Clockwork Remnant**
- Psychic assaults from the **Pale Choir**
- Strange, unidentifiable Dream pulses
- A troubling uptick in Creeps simply *vanishing*

The Vigil is stretched thin.
Creep Cohorts are vital to maintaining balance and keeping Limbo from slipping into silence, flame, decay, or mechanical cataloging.

WHAT CREEP PLAYER CHARACTERS ACTUALLY *DO*

And why they — specifically — are the ones who must do it.

Creeps serve as the **thin, squiggly line** between stability and total portal chaos.
Protagonists are members of a Vigil Cohort assigned to the **Portal Response Corps**, officially known as:

The Hands of the Lantern.

Every day is different. Every portal is unpredictable. And every mission requires nimble minds, unusual bodies, and a courage honed by embracing the surreal.

Creep PCs perform the following core duties:

Respond to Portal Alerts

When a portal trembles, flickers, collapses, opens wider than usual, shifts alignment, or begins humming

in a way that "sounds like trouble," the PCs are dispatched instantly.

They may need to:

- Secure the chamber
- Locate Trespassers or Truants
- Battle or repel Invaders
- Stabilize unstable Dream energy
- Perform emergency closure procedures
- Track entities that escaped into Limbo

Investigate Disturbances

Not all threats are loud or violent.
Sometimes what draws attention is *wrongness*:

- Missing shadows
- Strange smells or colors
- Localized silence
- Unseasonal astral winds
- Nightmares bleeding into waking space
- Lost humans wandering through closet-portals
- Dimensional echoes repeating in loops

PCs investigate, gather clues, conduct Awareness, Sorcery, or Investigation checks, and solve the mystery or prevent escalation.

Patrol Limbo's Border Zones

Cohorts perform regular patrols of areas known to attract threats:

- Abandoned caverns
- Border regions where other Cultures push inward
- Portal clusters
- Dream Passage complexes

Patrols often turn into:

- Search-and-rescue missions
- Creature containment operations
- Complications due to dimensional weather
- Chases through twisting tunnels

Escort Diplomats & Handle Diplomacy

Many cultures interact with Limbo. Some peacefully. Others not.

PCs often escort:

- Thryxian envoys
- Gloomwell merchants
- Murkdren witches
- Emberhearth negotiators

Or prevent these same groups from committing crimes, sneaking deeper, or triggering portal reactions.

Clear Out Dangerous Creatures

From shadowy beasties to escaped dream-nightmares to fungus-mutated vermin, Limbo is full of hazards.

Cohorts track, trap, subdue, or relocate such creatures using Tracking, Animal Handling, Sorcery, or Combat.

Maintain Local Stability

Creeps may be whimsical and odd, but they can be surprisingly rowdy, curious, or foolish.

PCs sometimes deal with:

- Creep brawls
- Pet outbursts
- Rogue Inventors

- Mischievous younglings
- Truant troublemakers

Social Skills often matter as much as combat.

WHY CREEPS DO THIS WORK

Why not bigger folk from other realms? Why not sorcerers? Why not machines?

There are **three primary reasons**, all of them biological or metaphysical:

Creeps Don't Disturb Portals the Way Big Folk Do

Large-bodied beings cause:

- Warp distortions
- Dream static
- Overloading of astral currents
- Dimensional ripples

Creeps are small, flexible, lightweight, and magically stable.
Portals "accept" them more easily, very likely due to their origins being in the nexus of Limbo itself.

Creeps are Naturally Resistant to Dream Instabilities

Their physiology — some part dream, some part flesh — protects them from:

- Mild psychic intrusion
- Light exposure to nightmare residue
- Spatial anomalies
- Minor astral winds
- Emotional resonance distortions

Other species get lost, crushed, or psychologically harmed.

Creeps Are Adaptable and Strange Enough to Think Like Portals

Creeps are:

- Problem solvers
- Born tinkers
- Natural sorcerers (in small amounts)
- Fear-resistant
- Emotionally resilient
- Curious by nature
- Almost impossible to fully demoralize

Their chaotic creativity often saves Limbo more effectively than brute force.

CHAPTER 20: LIMBO GAZETTEER

The Regions of Limbo

Limbo is not a single cave, nor a tidy underworld arranged in rings, levels, or moral lessons. It is a vast connected realm of caverns, fungal reaches, ember chambers, crystal falls, drowned corridors, dream-thin fractures, and old routes worn by traffic far older than any current map. It is a place of roads and misroads, of habitation and abandonment, of shrines still kept and districts no one quite admits are lost. Its regions feel distinct enough to be spoken of as separate countries by the lazy, yet they remain joined by tunnel systems, old passageways, caravan roads, ferry channels, fissure paths, and sanctioned routes watched—more or less—to keep the whole realm from dissolving into isolated pockets of superstition, hunger, and smuggling.

That connective tissue matters. Limbo is traversable because of its tunnels. Some are broad enough for caravans, patrol lines, wagons, and burden beasts. Some are little better than throat-like clefts in the stone through which only a few Creeps can squeeze at a time. Some are natural, some cut, some half-grown, some so old that no one now living can say whether they were carved by tool, claw, ritual, or some older architectural principle the realm has not bothered to explain. Among them all, however, there exist several recognized **main tunnels**: stable traffic arteries linking the six great regions and allowing commerce, patrol, pilgrimage, salvage, and foolishness to move from one part of Limbo to another without requiring every journey to become a fresh argument with death.

These main routes are one of the reasons Limbo functions at all. They are also one of the reasons the Vigil remains necessary. A world made of isolated horrors becomes a legend. A world made of linked horrors becomes an economy.

The six primary regions of Limbo are these: **The Great Cavern**, **The Fungal Forests**, **Emberdeep**, **The Dim Corridors**, **The Crystal Cavern**, and the **Dream-Drip Crevasses**. Each expresses a different mood of the realm. Each produces its own materials, dangers, customs, routes, and myths. Each rewards particular kinds of travelers and buries particular kinds of fools. Together they form the lived geography of **CREEPS!**, the broad stage on which trade, patrol, dream, hunger, ritual, wariness, and wonder all continue their untidy work.

The Great Cavern

The Great Cavern is the nearest thing Limbo has to a heart, though many would object to giving the realm credit for so warm or trustworthy an organ. It is the central region, the largest settled concentration in all of Limbo, the place where traffic thickens into

population and population hardens into districts, authority, culture, noise, and trouble. If Limbo is a nexus, the Great Cavern is the knot at the center of it. Roads and tunnels from every other major region eventually feed toward it. Caravans arrive there. Ferries unload there. shrine envoys pass through there. Vigil orders are issued there. Markets bloom there. Rumors reproduce there with dismaying success.

To enter the Great Cavern from one of the main arterial tunnels is to feel, often quite suddenly, that Limbo is not merely a wilderness of thresholds and haunted spaces. It is also inhabited. The stone opens. The ceiling rises. The dark stops being empty and starts being occupied. Sound travels differently there —less like private danger, more like civilization under strain. One hears bells, carts, voices, hammers, songs, bargaining, arguments, prayer, laughter, drill whistles, canal chains, beast noise, chalk scrapes, and the endless low murmur produced whenever too many lives are being lived in close proximity beneath one roof of stone.

The Great Cavern is not one uniform city, nor should it be imagined as such. It is a region of linked neighborhoods, older tunnel complexes, trade districts, fortified compounds, hidden shrines, collapse-prone underways, and routes whose legal status depends heavily on who is asking. It is layered. There are parts of it as old as any living memory and parts rebuilt last season after a collapse, riot, fungus bloom, or regulatory war. Some sections glow warmly with lantern fungus and habitation. Others remain half in shadow, too old, too useful, or too politically inconvenient to be fully tamed. The Great Cavern contains order, but it is the sort of order maintained by labor, compromise, paperwork, and the occasional armed intervention.

It is also the most culturally mixed place in Limbo. All the diversity of the nexus collects there: Creeps of every imaginable Kin and inherited oddness, foreign traders from dry kingdoms and wet realms, goblin crews, dwarven factors, fae envoys, artificers, beast drovers, shrine keepers, route wardens, salvage brokers, dream-workers, smugglers with polite shoes, and enough visiting strangeness to keep any census permanently embarrassed. The Great Cavern absorbs them all and gives them districts, prices, grudges, and local names.

For many campaigns, this region serves as the natural point of beginning. It is where a Protagonist can acquire work, enemies, companions, rumors, instruction, licenses, debts, maps, and the steady impression that their life would be calmer if they had been born in a less interesting world.

Within the Great Cavern, several major neighborhoods dominate both the practical and imaginative life of Limbo.

The Closetways

Of all the routes in Limbo, few are spoken of with so much familiarity and unease as the **Closetways**. They are among the strangest and most foundational passages in the setting: tangled tunnel-links connecting Limbo to human closets everywhere such links can still be made to hold. To say that they join Limbo to *every* human closet is the sort of exaggeration locals make with a straight face because it sounds truer than the literal explanation. In practice, the Closetways form a shifting but vast network of warm, narrow passages smelling faintly of dust, fabric, old wood, hidden corners, and the thick emotional weather of childhood dreams.

No region of Limbo sits closer to the realm's folklore than the Closetways. They are the arteries of nursery

fear, bedtime bravery, half-seen movement, whispered companionship, and every old story about something waiting in the dark between hanging coats. Human children dream strongly around closets. They fear them strongly too. That combination has made the Closetways one of the oldest and most active symbolic route systems in all Limbo. They are not stable in the same manner as stone roads. They expand, contract, branch, dead-end, reconnect, and occasionally behave according to emotional logic rather than architectural logic. Yet they remain indispensable.

For Creeps, the Closetways are a source of passage, rumor, commerce, danger, and origin-story. Many tales begin there. Many smuggling routes abuse them. Many dream incursions exploit them. Many rescues depend on them. They are also places of astonishing intimacy. The Closetways smell of lives being lived elsewhere. Coats brush the walls. Shoes loom like monuments. Dust lies in layers full of age, neglect, and private domestic weather. One can sometimes hear human voices at strange remove—laughter, crying, lullabies, arguments, footsteps, and the opening or closing of a door that means more than it should.

Closet Nexus 3

Closet Nexus 3 is one of the major managed convergence points in the Closetways, a heavily trafficked junction where dozens of passage branches can be monitored, recorded, and if necessary sealed. It is less a single room than a humming knot of passage galleries, hanging tags, route markers, sigil posts, and traffic ledges kept under constant scrutiny by licensed route-watchers. The place smells of chalk, warm wood, old fabric, and stress. If the Closetways are ever close to behaving like a formal transit system, they do it here.

The Nexus matters because children's fear and wonder are not evenly distributed, and the strength of the passageways reflects that. Some branches brighten, widen, or become dangerously active during certain seasons, holidays, household traumas, or local dream surges on the human side. The watchers at Nexus 3 monitor these fluctuations with a seriousness usually reserved for military weather. They know which closets are quiet, which are hot, which are prone to dream leakage, and which should not be approached by anyone lacking experience, permission, or a very good reason.

Doorway Junction

Doorway Junction is where closet traffic meets more conventional tunnel movement, and the mood changes accordingly. Here the symbolic softness of the Closetways gives way to more practical traffic patterns: handlers, couriers, smugglers, shrine workers, and Vigil inspectors all pass through, moving between the intimate weirdness of human-linked routes and the harder stone logic of Limbo proper. The Junction is crowded, noisy, and lined with small service stalls that sell chalk, wrapped lights, charms against dream panic, soft-soled footwear, and cloth covers meant to conceal one's outline during certain kinds of crossing.

It is also one of the places in Limbo where the contrast between worlds feels sharpest. To one side lies human domestic symbolism at its most charged and absurd; to the other, the great under-realm in all its market, law, and peril. There are few better places to understand what **CREEPS!** is about.

Sleepwalk Serenade Hall

This beautiful and unsettling chamber serves as both gathering place and ritual listening house for those who study the traffic of sleep through the Closetways. The Hall is lined with resonant beams,

soft hanging cloth, memory-catching hooks, and tuned surfaces that carry the murmur of dream-walking movement. Those trained to listen there claim they can hear not only footsteps, but moods: fear pacing, longing pausing, courage hesitating, loneliness standing very still behind a door. Whether that is poetry, discipline, or both depends on whom one asks.

The Hall is used for watch rites, Dreamcraft listening practice, and certain forms of threshold interpretation. It is one of the few places in Limbo where silence is respected enough to be almost expensive.

The Lower Warrens

Beneath and behind the more crowded life of the central cavern run the **Lower Warrens**, a sprawling network of ancient tunnels, forgotten shrine cuts, petrified root chambers, old stone galleries, and routes that no longer know whether they are abandoned. If the Great Cavern is Limbo's civic heart, the Warrens are its accumulated subconscious: older, less tidy, more symbolically unstable, and full of things no one wanted to throw away but no one quite wanted upstairs either.

The Warrens are maze-like in the old and malicious sense. Their walls do not always shift physically, but they may shift in perception, route memory, or symbolic emphasis, which is worse for anyone relying on confidence rather than a proper guide. Petrified roots twist through many sections, suggesting either a forest older than current geography or ritual structures that once treated roots and tunnels as the same thing. Cryptic markings abound: some Vigil, some pre-Vigil, some shrine glyphs, some route signs in dead dialects, some warnings still active enough to matter. The air is cooler there, often very still, and thick with the feeling that too many memories have settled without being aired properly.

The Lower Warrens are dangerous for practical reasons—collapse, false floors, bad footing, old pockets of taint—but also for subtler ones. Echo illusions are common. Memory residue clings to certain chambers. Travelers may find themselves briefly convinced they know a route they have never taken, or forget they have already crossed a junction twice. The Warrens are survivable, but they punish inattentive certainty.

Rootbone Shrine

Half shrine, half fossilized root cathedral, Rootbone is one of the oldest surviving devotional sites in the Lower Warrens. Great stone-white roots pierce the chamber walls and floor like ribs or pillars, braided around old altars, bowls, and prayer niches. No one agrees whom the original shrine was dedicated to. Current usage is careful, layered, and respectful without being doctrinally settled. Some come there to pray for safe return. Some come to leave memories they no longer trust themselves to carry. Some come because the place stabilizes certain dream disturbances. All leave quieter than they entered.

Collapse Corridor

This infamous stretch of tunnel is both route and warning. The Corridor remains in use because it connects important sections of the Warrens, but it does so on terms no engineer would endorse soberly. Ceilings groan. Floors crack. Side cuts vanish. Old collapse has left the walls folded into one another like broken teeth. Vigil braces and route tags keep the path usable, but only just. The Corridor teaches an important truth about Limbo: if a road is necessary enough, it remains open until it kills someone sufficiently important.

Silence Basin

An unnaturally still depression of smooth stone, the Silence Basin swallows sound with hungry efficiency. Voices die there. Steps become private. Even the ordinary noises of armor, cloth, or breath seem reduced to memory. It is used for clandestine meetings, meditation, route listening, and the occasional very bad ambush. Some believe the Basin was made by an old warding rite. Others believe it formed around an absence that never refilled. Both explanations are disturbing enough to satisfy the locals.

The Old Vigil Outpost

Long since superseded by better positions, the Old Vigil Outpost remains a stubborn shell of order in the deeper Warrens. Barricades, old signal niches, weapon racks, bunk alcoves, and half-preserved command carvings still remain. Some patrol crews use it as emergency shelter. Some salvage teams dream of stripping it clean and never quite do. It is said that the place remembers command voices and sometimes answers late, which is exactly the sort of rumor one hears in Limbo right before it becomes operationally relevant.

The Lantern Streets

If the Closetways are intimate and the Warrens are old, the **Lantern Streets** are alive. This is the commercial and cultural face of the Great Cavern: a sprawling market district lit by thousands of lichen lanterns, hanging glowglass, floating lightstones, oil cages, and imported lamps in all the shapes a nexus economy can invent. The Streets are crowded, warm, loud, and gloriously overcommitted. Goods from every region of Limbo and a shocking number of other worlds change hands there. So do news, grudges, performances, licenses, forged documents, foreign sweets, rare blades, fungus loaves, dream-safe bedding, and mistakes wearing price tags.

The Lantern Streets are where the Great Cavern remembers it is not merely surviving. It is living. Street singers perform beneath canal arches. Vendors argue over spice. Porters curse under the weight of dimensional cargo. Embassy runners elbow through market lanes. Smugglers pose as respectable cousins. Respectable cousins pose as smugglers when it suits them. Patrols move through in visible lines because commerce likes reassurance. The district is one of the most important social engines in all Limbo, and its economy drives large parts of the realm whether the realm is grateful or not.

The Great Glow Plaza

The Plaza is the central breathing space of the district, a broad market square under high stone roof where public lantern rigs hang like a constellation dragged close to the ground. Official notices go up there. Public bargains are struck there. Festivals, announcements, emergency levies, execution rumors, and embarrassing public speeches all occur there sooner or later. The Great Glow Plaza is where one goes to see Limbo looking busy enough to resemble confidence.

The Whistlewick Bazaars

This clustered maze of stalls, awnings, fixed shops, and moving carts is among the loudest and most profitable concentrations of trade in the Great Cavern. It is where practical goods meet imported absurdities and both find buyers. The name comes from the old market whistles once used to signal changing stall rights and guard sweeps; those whistles still sound sometimes, though now they mean too many things for newcomers to interpret safely. If the reader imagines the material soul of the nexus made visible, they could do worse than picture the Whistlewick Bazaars at their busiest hour.

Thryx Embassy Alcove

One of several diplomatic or mercantile foreign enclaves folded into the Lantern Streets, the Thryx Embassy Alcove serves as both trade post and cultural front for one of Limbo's more established non-native peoples. The Alcove is small but elegant, perpetually guarded, and annoyingly well-appointed. It deals in licensed foreign trade, selective negotiation, and the soft political work by which one world keeps itself visible in another.

Gloomwell Trade Outpost 7

A functional, heavily trafficked, and entirely unromantic trade station representing one of the major outer-route commercial networks. Outpost 7 is where goods are counted, fees are paid, manifests corrected, and cargo judged worth moving onward. It is beloved by quartermasters, feared by smugglers, and aesthetically appalling in exactly the manner of efficient institutions everywhere.

The Ink-Splatter Library

More public archive than true library and far more useful than its chaotic appearance suggests, the Ink-Splatter holds route logs, stall ledgers, copied maps, imported catalogues, customs notes, fragmentary histories, market law precedents, and the accumulated paper sediment of a thriving trade district. It is a paradise to scholars, brokers, codex thieves, and anyone looking for a very specific fact no one else bothered to remember.

The Vigil Sphere

Where the Lantern Streets represent commerce, the **Vigil Sphere** represents structure. It is the headquarters complex, command district, training center, communications nexus, and institutional spine of Limbo's defenders. The Sphere is less a single building than a fortified cavern-compound of halls, domes, training cuts, crystal chambers, barracks, archives, command galleries, signal stations, and portal-monitoring rooms, all planned with more discipline than warmth and more competence than beauty.

That does not make it cold in the emotional sense. Many lives are lived there in hard service. But the architecture of the Sphere is purposeful above all. Doors are placed where they need to be. Approaches are watched. Communication lines matter. Barricades can be raised quickly. Runners know where to run. Crystals hum with signal traffic. Nothing there is accidental except the occasional private despair.

The Sphere exists because Limbo cannot be defended by sentiment. Roads must be monitored. Portals must be tracked. Patrols must be deployed. Threat assessments must be made. Training must happen somewhere large enough to break people in before the realm does it for them. The Vigil Sphere is where all those necessities harden into daily life.

Lantern-Keeper Hall

A grand but severe chamber devoted to the traditions, records, and command rituals of the Vigil's lantern-bearing authorities. Orders are read there. Oaths are sworn there. Fallen patrols are named there. New officers discover there that responsibility is heavier than the polished parts of ceremony suggest.

Council Dome

This broad central chamber serves as the meeting place of senior Vigil authority, route administrators, defense planners, and all the layers of leadership required to keep Limbo's many emergencies from becoming one large synchronized embarrassment. The Dome is acoustically excellent, politically dangerous, and never as calm as visitors imagine from outside.

Training Grounds of Echo and Stone

No recruit forgets these grounds. The name is deserved. There, trainees learn route movement, collapse drills, tunnel fighting, lantern discipline, formation work, magical response, rescue procedure, and the deeply Limbo art of remaining effective while everything around them attempts to become unreasonable. The Grounds are as much about nerve as technique. Stone teaches weight. Echo teaches confusion. Together they produce professionals or casualties, and the Sphere prefers the first outcome.

Portal War Room

A chamber of maps, crystal monitors, route markers, alert grids, message channels, threshold status boards, and the kind of constant controlled alarm on which civilization occasionally depends. When portal instability rises, Dream Passage traffic spikes, or something ugly begins moving between regions at speed, the War Room becomes the most important room in Limbo for however long the crisis lasts.

The Fungal Forests

Beyond the urban pressure of the Great Cavern lie the **Fungal Forests**, a region so widespread and ecologically dominant that even those who dislike fungus must admit it has earned respect through persistence alone. Here the stone opens into vast groves of mushroom towers, spore canopies, root-

thick undergrowth, lichen glades, and damp trunks taller than watchtowers. It is one of Limbo's primary breadbaskets, medicine stores, cloth sources, fermentation grounds, and alchemical resource fields. It is also, in many parts, beautiful in the precise way that causes outsiders to relax at exactly the wrong moment.

The Fungal Forests are not one uniform biome. Some groves are soft-lit, still, and almost pastoral, their giant caps glowing gently in teal, amber, violet, and milk-white shades. Others are choked, wet, and hostile, heavy with spore clouds, crawling things, root knots, and fungal blooms that react badly to disturbance. Sound behaves strangely in the Forests. Some stands swallow it. Others amplify drips, rustles, and whispered conversation until the whole grove seems to be gossiping about the travelers. The air is thick with loam, damp bark, mycelial sweetness, medicinal bitterness, and the faint constant suggestion that everything is alive in more directions than expected.

The Fungal Forests are home to gatherers, medicine growers, hermits, spore workers, root-tenders, hidden shrines, old boundary stones, and settlements built high among fungal trunks or tucked into hollow root chambers. They produce salves, paper, lamp stock, sleeping compounds, preservative mold, fungus felt, dyes, rare reagents, and enough edible growth to keep large stretches of Limbo from starving. Trade from the Forests is indispensable. So are the warnings required to survive them.

Travel there requires respect. Spore tides can roll through a grove like weather. Some caps collapse underfoot and burst clouds large enough to drop an unmasked traveler into fever. Some mycelial mats remember foot traffic and route it oddly on the next passing. There are carnivorous strains, dream-reactive strains, hallucinogenic strains, and strains useful enough that people risk the first three to collect them. A wise guide knows which color means medicine, which means food, which means money, and which means apologize to your lungs.

The Spiral Roots

The most famous point of interest within the Forests is the **Spiral Roots**, a titanic zone of descending root ramps, coiled trunk passages, and subterranean grove architecture where fungal growth and stone tunnel have become impossible to separate cleanly. Paths wind downward in broad spirals around root-pillars thick as houses. Small settlements cling to shelf ledges along the descent. Prayer ties, route ribbons, fungus lanterns, and old carved warning sigils adorn the lower walls in layers.

The Spiral Roots are a crossroads within a crossroads. Trade from deeper fungus regions rises through them. Pilgrims descend through them. Alchemists collect there. Dream-workers come because some of the lower spirals are said to react to sleep pressure in useful ways. The whole place feels ancient, lived-in,

and faintly sentient in the way only overgrown places can feel. Travelers often speak of the Roots as though they were deciding whether to permit passage. That is nonsense, of course.

Probably.

Emberdeep

Where the Fungal Forests are wet and living, **Emberdeep** is hot, mineral, and half awake with fire. This region consists of volcanic caverns, heated fault tunnels, ash chambers, sulfur vents, ember fields, and broad lava-lit vaults where the stone itself glows with intermittent anger. It is one of Limbo's harshest resource regions and one of its most economically necessary. Metalwork, heat salts, ember horns, fireproofing, industrial minerals, furnace clay, smoke oils, and certain volatile alchemical substances all originate there or pass through its routes. Without Emberdeep, much of Limbo's heavy craft economy would stall.

Emberdeep is not uniformly fiery. There are warm roads, hot roads, dangerous roads, and roads that are really geological arguments disguised as transit options. Some chambers simmer in red gloom. Others blaze. Others are choked in steam and firemist thick enough to hide ledges, beasts, and the poor judgment of previous travelers. Heat is the first hazard, but not the last. Gas pockets, unstable crust, flash vents, brittle stone, and heat-driven territorial creatures all contribute to the local personality.

And yet people live there. Of course they do. They quarry, herd Ember Goats, tend furnace lines, mine mineral veins, and maintain whole settlements in the lee of tolerable heat. Their buildings are low, thick, and practical. Their patience for complaints about temperature is limited.

Firemist Lake

Among Emberdeep's most remarkable sites is **Firemist Lake**, a broad heat basin where dark mineral water lies atop deep thermal vents, exhaling a constant mantle of glowing steam and ember-colored mist. The lake is at once beautiful and fundamentally suspicious. Ferries do cross parts of it. Harvest crews do work its mineral shore. Certain rare salts and heat condensates form there in profitable quantity. It remains, however, a place where one should watch every step and trust no patch of calm vapor.

At night—or what passes for night in that region—the Firemist glows softly from below, turning the whole basin into a drifting red-gold dream of warmth and likely catastrophe. Some shrine traditions consider it sacred. Some industrial crews consider it payroll. Both are probably correct.

The Dim Corridors

If Emberdeep burns and the Forests bloom, the **Dim Corridors** endure. This region is a long tiered network of broad caverns, step-like stone terraces, and still black pools reflecting faint points of far overhead mineral light like stars in trapped water. More than any other major region, the Dim Corridors feel contemplative. That does not mean safe. It means quiet in a way that makes danger seem patient.

The Corridors are named for their light, or rather the lack of enough of it. Nothing is wholly dark there, but almost nothing is bright. Stone shelves descend in broad quiet layers. The water is black, still, and deeply reflective, enough so that the unwary sometimes misjudge depth, distance, or whether the stars they seem to see are actually overhead at all. Sounds carry strangely across the terraces. A footstep two levels up may seem to come from across the pool. Whispered prayer may travel farther than shouted warning. It is a

region of muted color, controlled movement, and long sightlines broken by reflective trickery.

The Dim Corridors are important for fresh water, ferry routes, certain meditative shrine traditions, and travel between several major tunnel systems. They are also one of Limbo's best regions for ambush if one is the sort of creature who can remain still longer than the prey thinks natural.

Stillwaters

At the center of the region lie the **Stillwaters**, the most serene and deceptive pools in all the Corridors. Their surfaces are so calm that some travelers find them reassuring and others find them intolerable. The Stillwaters are used for ferry transit, reflection rites, mourning practice, dream interpretation, and occasionally for dumping bodies in ways everyone later pretends not to have noticed.

There are said to be places among the Stillwaters where the reflected surface reveals not the current sky of stone, but another one: remembered, desired, or recently crossed. Such stories are dismissed publicly and consulted privately.

The Crystal Cavern

The **Crystal Cavern** is Limbo's region of light made solid. Great crystal growths rise there from floor, wall, and ceiling in fields, fans, towers, and jagged cathedrals of refracted brilliance. Some are inert mineral structures. Some hold charge. Some sing under contact. Some react to route pressure, dream leakage, or portal tension. The region is a major source of Lumishards, polished ritual crystal, lensing material, signal stone, and certain rare resonance tools used by the Vigil, artificers, route readers, and anyone else foolish enough to work with the structural grammar of light.

Travel in the Crystal Cavern is difficult in unique ways. The stone cuts sharply. Light refracts unpredictably. Distance lies. A lamp may multiply into ten false points. A shadow may vanish entirely. Sounds ring and scatter. Delicate structures can shatter if mishandled; others are tougher than iron and seem personally offended by tools. The region is beautiful enough to slow the unwary, and that alone has likely killed many.

Settlements there are fewer, but specialized. Cutters, crystal polishers, lens-makers, resonance scholars, shrine custodians, and certain elite craft houses maintain enclaves in the safer chambers. The trade coming out of the region is extraordinarily valuable, which explains why so many people keep trying to steal it and so many others keep dying elaborately in the attempt.

The Brightfall Shafts

The most famous site in the region is the **Brightfall Shafts**, a network of deep vertical caverns through which waterfalls of pure dream-light pour in silent or near-silent curtains. The light is not ordinary illumination. It is denser, stranger, and more responsive to presence than seems polite. It can be harvested in careful trace quantities, studied through lens rigs, worshipped by the impressionable, and feared by anyone with practical sense.

The Shafts are breathtaking. They are also one of the principal places in Limbo where light begins to resemble substance rather than condition. Platforms cling to the shaft walls. Bridges cross at nerve-testing heights. Catch basins and crystal ribs channel the falling brilliance into processing chambers and ritual stations below. To stand there is to understand why some people devote entire lives to studying the structure of weird things and why others keep backing slowly away from them.

The Dream-Drip Crevasses

At the perimeter of Limbo, where the realm thins toward the Astral and certainty begins to slur, lie the **Dream-Drip Crevasses**. This is the most unstable major region in all the Gazetteer: a land of fractures, dripping symbolic residue, floating stone, soft gravity, sudden emotional weather, and crystalline seams through which dream and Astral force leak in visible slow violence. If other regions are difficult places within Limbo, the Crevasses are one of the places where Limbo begins becoming something else.

The stone there is broken into rifts, ledges, hanging shelves, impossible gaps, and overhangs lined with translucent mineral growth. Drops of dream-infused condensate collect and fall from these growths in irregular rhythm, giving the region its name. The droplets are dangerous, valuable, spiritually charged, and often intensely beautiful until they land somewhere alive. Small stones drift off surfaces when gravity mood-swings. Hair rises with psychic winds. The air tastes of cold metal, old sleep, and distance.

The Crevasses are not a place for casual travel. They are a frontier zone of survey teams, shrine specialists, route readers, Vigil monitors, smugglers with suicidal confidence, and occult workers who need things no safer district can supply. Some parts are traversable only during periods of relative stability. Others should never be crossed and are crossed anyway whenever money, war, or desperation becomes persuasive enough.

The Hollow Seam

The most dangerous and important point in the region is the **Hollow Seam**, the true frontier where Limbo presses closest to the Astral. Here the fractures widen, the crystal seams brighten, and the laws of ordinary direction begin taking frequent breaks. Floating stones hang over open depth. Gravity pockets slip and twist. A voice raised too hard may echo back in the wrong mood. It is from the Hollow Seam that some of Limbo's most volatile portal phenomena are observed, and it is here that the Vigil's bravest and most tired specialists earn every scrap of their pay.

Astral Rim Platform

A fortified observation and operations ledge built out over one of the safer major fractures, the Platform serves as a monitoring point, staging post, emergency retreat anchor, and warning station. It is all rails, crystal gauges, tether lines, and disciplined anxiety.

Dream Fracture Line

A notorious run of unstable crevasses where dream force seeps visibly through the stone. The Fracture Line is beautiful enough to break concentration and dangerous enough to punish the lapse immediately.

The Nothing-Edge Step

A ledge route of terrible reputation, said to run so near to pure Astral emptiness that some travelers feel their thoughts thinning while they cross. No one who respects themselves likes being assigned there. This has not reduced traffic nearly enough.

The hazards of the Hollow Seam are constant: portal collapse, random gravity shifts, psychic winds, false footing, and symbolic intrusion severe enough to qualify as a hostile environmental condition. It is one of the last places any sensible traveler should visit.

Naturally, this means many campaigns eventually go there.

Limbo Travel

Travel & Routes in Limbo

No one survives in Limbo for long by pretending geography is enough.

A map helps. A lantern helps. Good boots, better rope, a trustworthy beast, a pocketful of chalk, and the humility to turn back before the tunnel begins whispering in an interested tone all help as well. But the deeper truth of movement in **CREEPS!** is that Limbo is not traveled by distance alone. It is traveled by route knowledge. Two places may lie physically near one another and yet be separated by hazards, jurisdiction, collapsed stone, dream-thin interference, territorial beasts, or symbolic nonsense severe enough to make the shorter road the slower one. Other places may stand far apart on paper and still feel almost adjacent because a stable tunnel, licensed ferry, or well-maintained passage binds them cleanly together.

That is why travelers in Limbo speak of **routes** more often than they speak of miles.

A route is more than a line between two points. It is a habit of movement. It has character. It has risk. It has history, users, chokepoints, weather, legal status, and reputation. Some routes are watched, swept, repaired, tagged, and logged by the Vigil. Some are tolerated but unmanaged. Some are known only to smugglers, shrine keepers, salvage crews, or the sort of old guide who spits before naming them. Some are physically stable but spiritually thin. Some are easy in summer and murderous during fungal bloom. Some are broad enough for a wagon line. Some are so narrow that only a few Creeps can pass side by side and all of them will regret bringing extra bags.

This section concerns how people actually move through Limbo: by **main tunnels**, **secondary ways**, **ferry lines**, **closet traffic**, **shrine routes**, and the many imperfect connective tissues that turn six regions into one functioning realm rather than six separate stories yelling across dark stone.

The Main Tunnels

The most important routes in Limbo are the **main tunnels**, those broad arteries of traffic substantial enough to support regular movement between the six primary regions. These are the roads on which caravans travel, dray beasts haul, patrols march, ferries unload onward cargo, and trade remains something more stable than rumor. They are never fully safe—this is Limbo, not a brochure—but they are the nearest thing the realm has to dependable infrastructure.

Most main tunnels are wide enough for one of three arrangements: two-way foot traffic, single-wagon passage with managed pull-offs, or burden lines with escort room to either side. The best maintained among them are reinforced where collapse threatens, marked at intervals with route symbols, fitted with bracket

lanterns or glow markers, and swept often enough that ordinary hazards remain ordinary rather than becoming folklore. Lesser main tunnels may have all of these virtues only in sections, which is usually how one discovers which district has recently paid its maintenance tithe and which has been pretending.

These routes are the physical basis of Limbo's political and economic unity. Without them, the Great Cavern could not dominate as it does, the Fungal Forests would feed only their nearest neighbors, Emberdeep's forge goods would stall at the edge of heat country, and the Crystal Cavern's precious materials would be too dangerous to move in regular quantity. The main tunnels allow all the regions to matter to one another.

That is also why control of them matters so much.

The Vigil claim authority over the major trunk routes, and in most civilized districts that claim is accepted, resented, or exploited according to local character. Toll rights, maintenance levies, patrol rotation, traffic priority, salvage claims from route-adjacent collapse, emergency closure authority, and bridge or ferry access all tend to produce paperwork, argument, and the occasional minor armed crisis. A traveler who uses the main tunnels benefits from the order produced by that system even if they dislike the officers collecting it. Lanterns are lit because someone pays for them. Barricades are repaired because someone compels it. Beast ramps are cleared because the road must remain open for those whose wealth depends on it. That someone is usually the Vigil, one of their chartered local partners, or a merchant bloc currently too frightened of interruption to behave cheaply.

Not all main tunnels are equally prominent, however. Some serve as great trunk roads between regions. Others are feeder lines joining a primary artery at some district or turn chamber. In common speech, travelers often refer to certain especially important segments by name.

The Central Trunk

The most heavily trafficked route system in all of Limbo is what most patrol records and caravan masters simply call the **Central Trunk**: the broad linked tunnel run joining the Great Cavern to the major outward arteries. Much of it begins or is managed from the approaches near the Great Cavern and its associated control districts. Traffic leaving the Great Cavern for any other primary region will usually spend some portion of its journey on the Central Trunk before branching outward.

The Central Trunk is practical rather than beautiful. It is cut broad, tagged often, and busy at nearly all hours. Wall lanterns or fungal lamp niches occur at regular intervals in stronger stretches. Pull bays allow burden lines to stand aside for oncoming cargo. Water cisterns, alarm bells, route shrines, and chalk boards mark the more disciplined segments. In places close to the Great Cavern, the Trunk is so well-used that it feels almost civic. Further out, maintenance becomes patchier and the realm begins showing through the infrastructure more aggressively.

A Protagonist traveling the Central Trunk will meet everyone Limbo produces in motion: caravan drovers, marsh traders, smith crews, shrine envoys, route children, messenger pairs, escorted prisoners, fungus carts, dwarven mule teams, exhausted patrol units, and the occasional traveler walking very fast without looking behind them. This makes the Trunk one of the richest places in the setting for rumor, jobs, incidents, theft, inspection, and overheard trouble.

It also means the Trunk is watched by predators. Some hunt its edges. Some stalk its resting points. Some infiltrate it in shape civilized enough to hold a cart book. The Trunk is safer than wilderness passage, not holier.

The Forest Roads

The main tunnel routes into and through the **Fungal Forests** are often called the **Forest Roads**, though this flatters them. These are broad root-lined passages and stone tunnels leading into the great fungal reaches and branching among the safer high-traffic groves. Unlike the drier hard-cut tunnels near the central trade zones, the Forest Roads are often semi-living spaces. Roots break through walls. Fungal shelves encroach. Glowcaps bloom in maintenance seams. Moisture shifts. Spore levels change by season. A road crew in the Fungal Forests does not "clear the tunnel" so much as negotiate with the ecology.

The Forest Roads are vital because they move food, medicine, felt, paper stock, spores, salves, lamp growth, and all the soft necessities of life into the broader Limbo economy. They are also used by pilgrims, herb workers, alchemical gatherers, and dream-watchers traveling to the deeper root shrines. Because of this, the Roads tend to have mixed traffic: cargo sleds, pack beasts, shrine litters, medics, and gatherers all using the same broad path while trying not to inhale anything ambitious.

Markers in the Forest Roads are often more organic than elsewhere. Painted bark tabs, hanging fungal ribbons, sap-sealed route plaques, and lichen lantern clusters are common. Travelers unfamiliar with them may miss signs locals read effortlessly. That is a fine way to wander off the correct shelf path and into bloom country that would prefer to keep you.

The Ember Routes

The principal roads into **Emberdeep** are among the most physically demanding maintained routes in Limbo. The **Ember Routes** pass through heated fault tunnels, ash corridors, steam cuts, and mineral arches that challenge both traveler and equipment. Traffic along them is slower, harder, and more carefully timed than in cooler regions. Certain segments are crossed by schedule to avoid flare periods, toxic vent surges, or load-bearing crust softening during peak heat.

The roads matter because Emberdeep's output matters. Smiths need ore. Armorers need furnace products. Alchemists need heat salts and volatile ash matter. Patrols need fireproofing. Traders need all the things that only hot, ugly labor can provide. As a result, the Ember Routes remain open under conditions that would close gentler roads at once.

These routes are lined not merely with lanterns but with heat signs, vent warnings, shelter alcoves, and emergency water casks wherever possible. Some walls are marked with color strips indicating current danger levels. Others ring softly when a heat seam shifts. Travelers unused to such signals should hire someone who can read them or prepare to learn through pain, which is the traditional alternative.

Dray beasts on the Ember Routes tend toward heat-tolerant stock, and travelers quickly discover that ordinary saddles, pack wraps, and boot soles are not built equally. One does not go to Emberdeep in casual gear unless one wishes to return as a teaching example.

The Terrace Ways

The broad paths crossing the **Dim Corridors** are known in many records as the **Terrace Ways**, a sensible enough name for roads that spend much of their length descending, rising, and skirting the vast terrace steps and black pools of that region. These are some of Limbo's most visually misleading routes. The stone itself is broad enough, the footing often good

enough, yet reflection, distance, and silence create a constant low threat of misjudgment. A turn too fast, a ferry reached too late, a shelf edge mistaken for reflected light—many small humiliations and a fair number of deaths begin there.

The Terrace Ways support important water movement, shrine traffic, and the travel of those avoiding hotter or spore-heavier roads elsewhere. Ferries, causeways, and bridge spans join the routes in complex fashion. In dry seasons or low-channel periods, some traffic may use lower shelf paths directly. In wetter periods, those same paths vanish and all respectable movement shifts upward or onto water.

Because the Dim Corridors carry both practical and contemplative significance, the Terrace Ways often pass shrines, watch stations, memorial stones, and pause ledges where travelers are expected to behave as though silence might still be a civic virtue. Not everyone manages this.

The Crystal Lines

The main routes through the **Crystal Cavern** are called the **Crystal Lines**, and no one sensible travels them without eye protection, proper lamps, and an understanding that what one sees ahead may not be where it appears to be. The Lines are cut or marked through crystal fields, refractive galleries, and resonance-active stone. In some sections they run along old carved ledges. In others they are tagged paths across open chambers where the "road" is less built than agreed upon.

The Lines matter because crystal, lens-work, resonance materials, and Lumishards must be moved if the central districts are to function. Yet traffic there is tightly managed in many places, not merely because the goods are valuable but because the environment itself reacts badly to poor handling. A dropped cart, a cracked growth wall, a badly timed blow, or a resonant overload can produce collapse, blinding scatter, or more interesting forms of disaster than standard road engineers care to document.

Some Crystal Line segments are closed during heavy extraction or active Brightfall flow changes. Others require guide chains, passage marks, or district permission. A traveler who ignores these restrictions may save time briefly and lose every reflective surface in the next room permanently.

The Fringe Paths

Approaches to the **Dream-Drip Crevasses** and the Hollow Seam are collectively called the **Fringe Paths**, though one should not mistake the name for reassurance. These are not common trade roads in the ordinary sense. They are frontier routes, survey lines, shrine-watch approaches, specialist corridors, and monitored access ways leading toward Limbo's perimeter and its thinnest contact with the Astral. Traffic there is sparse, purposeful, and usually under some form of supervision, whether official or improvised.

Unlike the other regional routes, the Fringe Paths are not maintained primarily for commerce. They are maintained for necessity. Observation teams must travel them. Repair crews must reach failing markers. Surveyors must test new shifts. Certain ritual workers, Dreamcrafters, and threshold specialists must come and go. Sometimes military or emergency response traffic must move there as well. All of this happens against a background of unstable gravity, psychic weather, loose stone, symbolic distortion, and occasional reality fatigue.

Markers on the Fringe Paths are more elaborate than ordinary route signs. Tether posts, directional

crystals, weighted guide lines, warning harmonics, and stabilizing sigils are common. Travelers who tamper with them should be charged extra for the rescue.

Secondary Ways, Service Tunnels, and Local Cuts

Beneath the glory of the main routes lies the great web of **secondary ways**: service tunnels, feeder cuts, old shrine passages, maintenance bores, cargo bypasses, quarry roads, fungus shelves, root lanes, abandoned patrol walks, vent galleries, ferry stairs, and every other route by which a realm truly lives. These are the roads locals know and strangers get wrong.

A secondary way may be entirely safe and still undesirable. It may be quicker but filthier, narrower, wetter, steeper, less legal, more expensive, spiritually odd, or under the private control of some local power whose name sensible people lower their voices to say. Others are perfect little routes no guide is foolish enough to announce publicly because their value lies in not becoming crowded.

For the Creepmaster, secondary ways are where the setting breathes. They are where shortcuts happen, ambushes occur, hidden shrines survive, smuggling prospers, and local knowledge becomes worth more than iron. A Protagonist traveling Limbo should often face choices between route types: safe but slow, fast but exposed, legal but expensive, quiet but symbolic, crowded but patrolled, or unknown and therefore interesting in all the wrong ways.

Closet Traffic

No travel section in **CREEPS!** would be honest if it treated the **Closetways** as a mere curiosity. They are a real part of Limbo's movement ecology. Not all Closetways are suitable for trade, and many are too unstable, intimate, or symbolically loaded for routine traffic. Even so, they remain crucial for small-scale movement, communication, rescue, infiltration, dream-work, and the subtle forms of passage by which some of Limbo's most important stories begin.

Closet traffic is rarely large. It favors scouts, messengers, guides, dream-watchers, smugglers, and any Creep small enough, clever enough, or desperate enough to navigate spaces brushed by human domestic imagination. A closet route can save days. It can also deliver a traveler into exactly the wrong emotional weather if entered without care. Because Closetways are responsive to dream pressure, household condition, child fear, memory, ritual objects, and other intimate influences, no closet road is ever quite

"just a tunnel." It is always also a symbolic relationship in wood and dark.

The Vigil do monitor some Closetway hubs, especially major nexuses, but much of the network resists full bureaucratic discipline. This ensures two things: the setting stays alive, and the paperwork never wins.

Ferry Lines and Water Routes

Where Limbo provides water, Limbo also provides boatmen. The **ferry lines** of the marshes, stillwater corridors, underground canals, thermal lakes, and black channels are as important to movement as any stone tunnel. In some regions they are not merely alternatives to overland passage but the primary route system available. Ferries carry people, cargo, animals, rumor, and inspections with equal professional resentment.

Water travel changes the rhythm of play. It narrows options. It sharpens ambush. It shifts concealment. It makes weather and current matter. It places the party in the hands of pilots who often know more than they say and less than they imply. Ferry stations become natural social nodes: places to hear route condition, buy marsh food, hire guides, exchange money, mend tack, and discover that the crossing fee has doubled because something upstream is now alive in a commercially relevant way.

Some ferries are licensed and regular. Some are private. Some are shrine-run. Some are little more than a polecraft and a person with a terrifying degree of confidence. A good ferry line can turn a ten-hour trudge into a quiet crossing. A bad one can become a floating encounter site with receipts.

Shrine Routes and Pilgrim Ways

Not all travel in Limbo is commercial. Some of it is devotional, ritual, funerary, commemorative, or tied to practices the realm takes too seriously to call quaint. **Shrine routes** and **pilgrim ways** connect sacred sites, memory basins, threshold chapels, dream-watch halls, root shrines, mourning chambers, and other places where movement is part of the rite rather than just the approach to it.

These paths are often maintained differently than ordinary roads. Their markers may be symbolic instead of practical. Their shelters may be hosted by shrine cells rather than trade inns. Their rules may include silence, offerings, lamp etiquette, or taboos about what may be carried, spoken, or remembered while passing. Some are open to all. Some are watched. Some are legal only seasonally. Some are formally public and effectively private, which is a much more Limbo distinction than it first sounds.

Pilgrim ways matter in play because they provide access to unusual services, refuge, lore, and specialized knowledge. They also carry their own politics. A route watched by a shrine is watched differently than one watched by a warden. That difference can save or ruin a traveler depending on what they are bringing.

Route Marking, Wayfinding, and Signs

Travelers in Limbo mark routes obsessively because the realm has earned it.

Common route signs include chalk arrows, coded colors, hanging tags, scratch marks, carved niche sigils, fungal lantern clusters, bell strings, stone stacks, shell chips, thread ties, and region-specific symbols. In stable trade corridors, official signs may be mounted in iron brackets or carved into stone at measured intervals. In less formal routes, markers are often local and temporary, readable only to those taught them. Some are practical. Some are ritual. Some are lies left by thieves with time on their hands.

Wayfinding in Limbo therefore demands both skill and caution. A sign may mean “safe road.” It may also mean “safe road if you are paying the people who put this sign here.” A missing mark may indicate ordinary neglect or active trouble. A doubled mark may mean the route has changed. A beautifully drawn mark may mean a fae guide was feeling helpful or bored. All of these are materially different.

For this reason, chalk, glow-chalk, journals, route maps, tagged cords, sounding tools, and local guides are always worth carrying if the journey matters.

Road Hazards

Travel in Limbo is not dangerous merely because monsters exist. The roads themselves produce enough trouble to remain professionally interesting.

Common route hazards include collapse, bad air, washouts, spore bloom, vent surges, crystal scatter, false footing, ferry chain snap, beast panic, traffic bottleneck, symbolic drift, route theft, marker tampering, and what seasoned caravan people simply call **mood**. A tunnel can feel wrong before the cause is obvious. A path can become socially unsafe before it becomes physically unsafe. A district can stop guaranteeing part of a route without telling anyone loudly enough. The Creepmaster should treat roads not as passive lines but as environments with conditions.

This also gives route travel texture. Not every danger must be an attack. Sometimes the scene is about deciding whether to press through collapse dust, whether to wait for ferry dawn, whether to trust a side guide, whether to pass through a silent pilgrim road while armed smugglers are likely using the main route, whether to pay the toll and save time, whether the shortcut through old shrine stone is worth the dream pressure, or whether the beast knows better than the map.

In Limbo, the beast often does.

Travel Times and Route Judgment

Exact distance matters less in Limbo than route class, load, weather, and current conditions. A broad main tunnel with steady footing may carry a group quickly between regions. A symbolic or unstable path may stretch, delay, or complicate movement far beyond its physical length. The Creepmaster is usually better served by thinking in terms of **clear route**, **hard route**, and **bad route** than in exact mileage.

A clear route is maintained, known, and reasonably stable.
A hard route is passable but dangerous, tiring, or condition-sensitive.
A bad route is one used because the alternatives are worse, unavailable, or unaffordable.

This classification helps determine not only time, but the likelihood of incident. Main tunnels shorten distance. Secondary ways shorten safety. Closet routes shorten time and lengthen symbolism. Ferries shorten walking and lengthen dependency. Shrine ways shorten panic and lengthen obligations.

That is a better fit for **CREEPS!** than sterile arithmetic.

The Role of the Vigil in Travel

The Vigil do not own all roads, but they shape nearly all serious movement through the realm. Their patrols clear dangers, maintain barriers, inspect route signs, update warning boards, regulate certain crossings, and close roads when required. They also enforce the legality of some passage and the visibility of some

trade. A traveler using major routes will feel their presence whether through patrols, toll posts, route notices, garrison inns, inspection ledgers, or the simple fact that the lanterns remain lit because somebody organized it.

This can be annoying. It can also be the difference between travel and disappearance.

A route under current Vigil watch tends to be safer, better marked, and more expensive in time or formality. An unwatched route tends to be freer, riskier, and more subject to local powers. Neither condition is automatically superior. A smuggler, shrine pilgrim, desperate rescuer, or dream-worker may prefer one or the other depending on need. What matters is that the choice means something.

Travel in Play

Travel in **CREEPS!** should never feel like dead space between adventures. Limbo's routes are part of the adventure. They define mood, expose culture, reveal danger, and create meaningful choices. A road tells the party what sort of world they are moving through. A broad Trunk says civilization is trying. A flooded ferry lane says commerce adapted. A closet route says intimacy has become infrastructure. A shrine road says memory has jurisdiction. A fringe path says someone thought this was a good idea and was either very brave or fatally professional.

Use routes to foreshadow regions before the party reaches them. Let Emberdeep announce itself through heat and ash in the approach tunnels. Let the Fungal Forests begin with smell long before the first luminous cap comes into view. Let the Crystal Lines turn a lantern into ten false suns. Let the Dream-Drip approaches make speech feel heavier. Let the Great Cavern be heard before it is seen.

Most of all, let roads matter.

Because in Limbo, as in life, what happens on the way there often becomes the reason the place mattered at all.

CHAPTER 21: BESTIARY

The creatures in **CREEPS!** are not merely obstacles.

That may sound obvious, but it is worth stating plainly, because many fantasy bestiaries quietly train the reader to look at living things as if they exist only to be fought, counted, looted, or remembered for how much trouble they caused in a corridor. Limbo does not work that way. Limbo is too strange, too inhabited, too layered, and too temperamental for its creatures to be reduced to simple encounter math. Some of the beings in this Bestiary are certainly monsters in the straightforward sense: things that stalk, tear, feed, infest, possess, consume, ruin, deceive, or otherwise make ordinary civic life much more difficult than anyone deserves. But others are nuisances, spirits, scavengers, guardians, semi-domesticated hazards, invaders, territorial beasts, fae meddlers, dream-predators, elemental spillovers, or lost visitors from the Human World who have become part of the problem simply by arriving at the wrong time through the wrong door.

That matters.

A Creep does not live in a world where all danger is neatly sorted into "enemy" and "non-enemy." A Boogeyman is a horror, yes, but a House Cat in the wrong room can destroy a stealth scene just as thoroughly. A Gloam-Born may be a shadow-elemental predator, but a Pocket-Beast swallowing the wrong object can turn an orderly investigation into a crisis of missing evidence and moral frustration. A Great Eagle may be a threat, ally, omen, or border guardian depending entirely on context. Even a Goblin is not only a fight waiting to happen. It may be a thief, liar, witness, nuisance, informant, black-market runner, scavenger, local resident, or temporary ally whose loyalty lasts exactly as long as the direction of profit does.

That is the tone this Bestiary is written to support.

The creatures here belong to a world of **Dream Portals, hidden districts, strange civic pressures, old magical residue, and intimate weirdness**. They are meant to feel like part of Limbo's ecology, folklore, infrastructure, fear, and daily life. They are the things the Vigil studies, patrols, bargains with, warns children about, underestimates, overreacts to, cleans up after, accidentally shelters, and occasionally learns to live beside. Some are old as thresholds. Some are new as this morning's breach report. Some should be exterminated without sentiment. Some should be redirected, contained, soothed, or understood before steel is drawn. Some should be left very much alone.

Because **CREEPS!** is built on a One-on-One-facing engine, these entries are also written to function differently from lighter skirmish-style monster blocks. These are not abstract bags of numbers. They are encounter-ready beings shaped for scenes. That

means each entry emphasizes **physical description, behavior, temperament, setting fit, and usable mechanical identity** rather than cluttering the page with stray fragments of over-detailed movement or skill notation. A creature should tell the Creepmaster what it looks like, what it wants, how it tends to act, what kind of space it belongs in, and what makes it dangerous or memorable. If a Creep encounters a Nightmare-Wight, the Creepmaster should know not only how hard it hits, but how the lantern light dies around it, how fear gathers before it strikes, and what sort of room becomes worse simply by allowing it to remain there.

To support that, every creature in this section is presented using a standardized format:

Threat gives a quick sense of how serious the being is in direct play. It is not a promise of fairness. Limbo is not fair, and a clever Threat 1 nuisance in the wrong environment may be more dangerous than a louder Threat 4 brute in a room built to expose it.

Wounds reflect how much punishment the creature can take before it is dropped, broken, dispersed, driven off, or otherwise neutralized in a scene. This format follows the broader One-on-One approach of collapsing the old split between "how hard it is to hit" and "how much life it has" into a cleaner presentation of resilience, encounter durability, and functional staying power.

How Creature Wounds Work

Use the normal One-on-One combat flow for everything: roll to hit, compute Edge, roll damage, subtract DR, convert to a Wound Tier as usual. The only shortcut is how you track that result for monsters.

The Wounds value on a creature is its "meaningful hits" track. You don't track Light/Medium/Severe separately for most NPCs. Each time an attack would inflict at least a Light Wound (after DR), mark 1 Wound off the creature. If the hit would qualify as a Severe or Critical Wound on a PC (big Damage Score / high Edge), you may mark 2 Wounds instead.

At 0 Wounds, the creature is out of the fight: dead, destroyed, routed, or otherwise removed, as fits the fiction. Tough "boss" foes can still use full PC-style wound tiers if you want more detail, but for most enemies, just spend the Wounds track as above and let the fiction describe how ugly each hit looks.

Armor reflects toughness, hide, supernatural resistance, density, or protective structure where relevant. Mechanically, this is a creature's Armor Rating (AR), as presented in the standard combat rules.

Attack gives the creature's most direct harmful means of action, but that does not imply all encounters should become combat scenes. In many cases, the more interesting question will be whether the creature can be delayed, redirected, escaped, calmed, negotiated with, or neutralized through means other than straight harm.

Each entry then includes **Traits & Abilities** written in direct, playable language. These traits are not decorative flavor tags. They tell the Creepmaster how the creature changes a scene. A Troll's regeneration alters pacing. A Shadow's incorporeal nature changes weapon choice and light use. A Lantern Wisp changes navigation. A Child changes what the whole scene is about. A Rakshasa changes whether the danger begins long before initiative ever does.

This Bestiary is also organized to reflect the logic of Limbo itself.

The categories are broad enough to be useful but distinct enough to preserve tone: **Undead**, **Humanoids**, **Fey & Faerie Creatures**, **Beasts**, **Dragons & Mythic Beasts**, **Demons, Devils & Dark Spirits**, **Aberrations & Eldritch Creatures**, **Limbo-**

Natives & Strangelings, **Elemental Creatures & Beings**, and **Human World Individuals**. Within each category, entries are placed in **alphabetical order** to make book use faster at the table. This allows a Creepmaster to find what they need without remembering whether a Bump was originally introduced before or after some much larger horror from another section of the manuscript.

That organizational choice matters more than it may seem. A working bestiary must be readable during play. If a Creepmaster reaches for the section because the route suddenly contains a Stone Warden, a Troll, or a Pocket-Beast with evidence in its stomach, the text should support quick access without sacrificing atmosphere. That is why spacing, category structure, and page logic matter here. Each category should begin cleanly. Each entry should breathe on the page. The creature should feel like it belongs to a world, not just to a list.

And that, finally, is the best way to read what follows.

Do not treat these beings only as combatants. Treat them as residents of pressure. As signs of district mood. As old rumors with teeth. As threshold consequences. As ecological facts. As neighbors nobody wanted, but somebody now has to account for. Treat them as the strange population of a realm where wardrobes lead elsewhere, lanterns sometimes know more than they say, and the difference between nuisance and nightmare can be as small as who opened the door first.

Some of these creatures are here to be slain.
Some are here to be survived.
Some are here to be pitied.
Some are here to be feared.
Some are here to be bargained with, tracked, soothed, fed, catalogued, avoided, escorted home, or blamed in reports with increasing specificity.
A few are here to remind everyone that Limbo's idea of "native wildlife" has always been somewhat more ambitious than common sense would advise.

If the Bestiary is doing its work, the reader should come away with more than tactical knowledge. They should come away with a deeper sense of what kind of place Limbo is.

A place with old graves and older laughter.
With fungus gardens and hidden canals.
With children's routes, cracked seal-lines, under-stair shrines, darkened wardrobes, dream-fed halls, and district corners where the locals know exactly which noises not to follow.
A place where danger is intimate, often ridiculous at first glance, and then very sincere.
A place where one little guardian, one lantern, one good knife, one steady word, or one properly timed refusal can mean the difference between a strange night and a district tragedy.

That is the world this Bestiary serves.

Use it well.
Do not trust the small harmless thing too quickly.
Do not ignore the pretty one.
Do not assume the dead will stay still.
Do not underestimate what came through the water.
And if a Lantern Wisp offers to show you a shortcut, try very hard to determine whether it likes you, pities you, or has simply become bored.

UNDEAD

Rotten things, restless things, whispering things — all drawn to the Dream Passages like moths to a lantern.

Skeleton

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Rusty Sword or Bone Claws — 1d6

Bare bone animated by leaking Dream energy, Skeletons clatter and twitch with unsettling eagerness. Their empty sockets often glow with dim blue or fungus-green light, and many still wear scraps of uniform, burial cloth, or whatever bad decision they died in. They are not intelligent, but they are just coordinated enough to be irritating in groups. Some seem almost cheerful about pursuit, in the way a trap might be cheerful if someone had painted a smile on it.

Skeletons are common around forgotten chambers, collapsed crypt routes, old shrines, breached ossuaries, and Dream Passages that have been left to sulk for too long. They fight without fear, but not without pattern: they bunch, rattle, and press where a living foe is least comfortable. They are often used as first-line guardians by anyone too lazy, arrogant, or necromantically overbooked to hire living help.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Bone-Light Frame:** Attacks with blunt force gain Advantage against Skeletons; piercing weapons often glance unless aimed well.
• **Cold Dead Matter:** Skeletons ignore poison, disease, and ordinary fear.
• **Bone Scatter:** When reduced to 0 Wounds, a Skeleton may collapse explosively into flying fragments. Anyone at Reach must test Grace or suffer 1d4 harm before Armor.
• **Mindless Persistence:** They do not retreat unless commanded, shattered, or deprived of animation.

Zombie

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Slam, Rotting Grip, or Bite — 1d6

Zombies are slow, damp, and full of the wrong kind of patience. Their flesh hangs swollen from astral decay, dream seepage, grave mold, or plain old neglect. Some stagger in silence. Others groan with the vague emotional tone of someone deeply inconvenienced by still being here. A Zombie does not need to understand the room to make it worse.

They are found in dark corridors, half-flooded burial sites, abandoned infirmaries, old quarantine tunnels, and anywhere a body remained too near wrongness for too long. Zombies react strongly to noise, warmth, and movement. They are not fast, but they do not embarrass easily, and that alone makes them a nuisance. More than one Patrol has been taught the hard lesson that a slow enemy becomes dangerous the moment you assume the problem is behind you.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dead Weight Grip:** On a successful hit with a strong Degree of Success, a Zombie may seize the target. Escaping requires an opposed test of Might or Grace.
• **Unfazed by Fear:** Zombies do not test against ordinary terror, intimidation, or gruesome spectacle.
• **Sluggish but Relentless:** They suffer Disadvantage on sudden repositioning, pursuit, and complex maneuvering, but gain no fatigue from prolonged advance.
• **Corpse Persistence:** Unless the head, spine, or

animating force is properly ruined, a dropped Zombie may rise again if the scene allows neglect to matter.

Ghoul

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Raking Claws — 1d8; Gnawing Bite — 1d8

Ghouls are what happens when hunger persists past the point where death should have ended the argument. Lean, foul, and half-animal in movement, they travel on bent limbs with terrible speed, their fingers worn into hooked claws and their teeth sharpened by a long career of bad meals. Their eyes gleam with wet appetite, and their laughter—when they make any sound at all—often comes out as a choking, delighted hiss. They are not noble undead. They are scavenging obsession given a body.

In Limbo, Ghouls haunt graveyards, plague pits, collapsed chapels, old pauper vaults, and any Dream Passage that opens too often near the dead. They are pack predators and grave-robbers, drawn to mass graves, forgotten crypts, and battle-sites where fear and flesh mixed badly. Some occult sects and more than one truly disreputable necromancer have used them as battlefield cleaners, which says far more about those employers than it does about the Ghouls.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Grave Tunneler**: Ghouls gain Advantage on Stealth, pursuit, and ambush attempts in graveyards, cryptfields, burial mounds, and barrow tunnels.
• **Corpse Addiction**: A Ghoul may abandon better tactical judgment if fresh corpses, exposed dead, or mass graves are nearby. Clever Patrols exploit this when they can stomach the method.
• **Pack Hunter**: Ghouls gain Advantage when attacking a surrounded, prone, pinned, or cornered target.
• **Numbing Bite**: On a successful bite with strong Edge, the Creepmaster may impose temporary limb numbness, infection risk, or brief paralytic weakness depending on scene tone and severity.

Ghast

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Claw Rend — 1d8+1

A Ghast is a Ghoul that has ripened into something meaner, cleverer, and much more aware of the effect it has on a room. Taller, longer-limbed, and more corpse-elegant in its horror, a Ghast often carries itself with a parody of pride. Its claws drip blackened necrosis, its mouth opens too wide when it shrieks, and the smell around it is not simple rot but grave air mixed with old fear. It knows what it is doing, and that is unfortunately worse.

Ghasts lead lesser ghouls, defend feeding grounds, and infest old necrotic sites where the dead were frightened for too long before they stopped moving. In some parts of Limbo, a Ghast is what locals mean when they say a cemetery has "gone managerial." They are territorial, malicious, and deeply fond of breaking nerve before they break flesh.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Aura of Dread**: Anyone engaging a Ghast at Reach must test Presence on first contact or suffer Disadvantage on their next action against it.
• **Necrotic Claws**: A Ghast's successful wound may leave lingering stiffness, grave-chill, or tissue blackening until treated.
• **Ghast Shriek**: Once per fight, a Ghast may unleash a piercing shriek. Nearby foes must test Presence or lose their next main action to recoil, stagger, or pure offended panic.

• **Pack Authority**: Lesser ghouls within sight of a Ghast often gain Advantage on morale, pursuit, and coordinated attack behavior.

Wraith

Threat: 3
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0 (special)
Attack: Life-Drain Touch — 1d8 cold or spirit harm

Wraiths are mercurial shadows stretched into person-shapes that no longer fully remember why bodies needed bones. Their faces lengthen into screaming hollows, their edges shiver like wet ink in cold water, and the air around them frosts with grief. Walls, doors, and stone mean little to them; they drift through architecture as if insulted anyone expected otherwise. Their presence leaves patterns like weeping faces in the cold.

A Wraith is less a corpse than a grievance. They haunt isolated chambers, ruined nurseries, sealed corridors, abandoned sanctums, drowned vaults, and places where someone died with fear so concentrated that even the wall kept a taste for it. They hunt hope as much as flesh, and often prefer prey that notices them coming just early enough to understand the problem.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Incorporeal**: Mundane physical attacks suffer strong Disadvantage or deal reduced harm unless they are blessed, symbolically resonant, magically prepared, or otherwise suited to striking the unreal.
• **Dread Pull**: On a successful touch or as a scene action, a Wraith may drag a target spiritually or emotionally toward it; the victim tests Presence or Grace to resist being drawn closer.
• **Cold of the Grave**: Its attacks may impose numbness, despair, or weakness in addition to raw wound harm.
• **Wall-Walker**: Barriers, doors, and ordinary terrain rarely protect against a Wraith unless sanctified, warded, or symbolically reinforced.

Lich-Fragment

Threat: 3
Wounds: 2
Armor: 1
Attack: Necro Bolt — 1d8 spirit or necrotic harm

A Lich-Fragment is not a complete lich and is often furious about that fact. It may appear as a drifting skull, a cluster of hovering vertebrae, a rib cage full of malignant light, or a suspended arrangement of bones held together by fractured will. These remnants mutter half-spells, forgotten names, and administrative complaints from before death became untidy. They are dangerous less because of raw mass than because of the unstable sorcery leaking from what remains.

Found near failed immortality rites, archive vaults, broken sanctums, or Dream Passages that licked the wrong old grave, Lich-Fragments are often lost, confused, and catastrophic in exactly the way confused magic tends to be. Some wander. Some guard places they no longer understand. Some become violently offended if addressed as "just a skull."

Traits & Abilities:
• **Residual Sorcery**: A Lich-Fragment may use minor cursed workings such as ash veils, dust swirls, spiteful bolts, or sudden cold.
• **Cold Undeath**: It ignores fear, poison, and ordinary bodily afflictions.
• **Fragmented Mind**: Clever talk, names from its former life, or relevant lore may distract or enrage it depending on how cleanly those memories survive.
• **Hovering Remnant**: It ignores common ground

obstacles and can attack from awkward angles with insulting ease.

Bone Colossus

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 2
Attack: Bone Club, Crushing Fist, or Body-Slam — 1d10+2

A Bone Colossus is a giant made from the bad accounting of a place that buried too many dead without enough reverence. It towers on fused femurs, rib arches, spine-columns, and clattering masses of bound skeletons, often with several skulls still whispering from within its body cavity like an extremely poor choir. Its gait shakes stone. Its silhouette turns corridors into choices about retreat.

Colossi are found where mass death took root: plague trenches, battle-caverns, failed ossuaries, ritual slaughter sites, and grave-fields soaked through with old Dream energy. They are not subtle. They are often slow, but any creature that treats a Bone Colossus as merely slow is volunteering to become educational debris.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Mass of Bones**: Small weapons and light glancing blows often struggle to matter unless aimed with excellent Edge or symbolic purpose.
• **Trample**: A Colossus may force passage through smaller foes, inflicting harm and throwing them aside on failed Grace or Might tests.
• **Rattle of the Many Dead**: Its approach can force fear or disorder among civilians, animals, and inexperienced defenders.
• **Terrible Momentum**: Once committed to a charge or step-through advance, stopping it cleanly usually requires real leverage, structural tricks, or very brave stupidity.

Corpse Mound

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 1
Attack: Slam Mass, Grasping Limb, or Smothering Crush — 1d10

A Corpse Mound is a shambling hill of dead flesh fused by rot, fungus, old burial wrongness, and whatever necromantic laziness thought quantity might substitute for taste. Faces sink in and emerge again. Arms reach out and are pulled back under. Legs buckle and become support pillars. It moves like a landslide trying to remember anatomy. Looking at it for too long is often less useful than leaving.

Corpse Mounds gather in battlefields, plague pits, collapsed charnel houses, and any mass grave left to stew in magical saturation. They are drawn to fresh dead, active slaughter, and places where too many bodies were left under too little supervision. Some are nearly mindless; others contain enough merged memory to become hateful in broad directions.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Swallow Limb**: On a strong successful hit, the Mound may trap an arm, leg, or smaller body entirely. Escape requires a strong contested effort.
• **Fused Mass**: Called shots and precision work suffer Disadvantage; there is no one clean body to fight.
• **Vulnerable to Fire**: Flame, cleansing heat, and certain alchemical compounds gain Advantage or bonus harm.
• **Corpse Hunger**: The Mound is drawn toward fresh bodies, downed combatants, and scenes of concentrated death.

Vampire

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Claw — 1d8+1; Bite — 1d8 drain

Elegant, pale, and offensively well-composed, Vampires move through Limbo with the manner of people who believe every room belongs to them eventually. Their faces are beautiful in the wrong way: too still, too perfect, too hungry behind the eyes. Their voices soothe until they do not. They are predators who understand civility as camouflage.

In Limbo, Vampires often seek rare dream-rich blood, occult leverage, district influence, or private feeding grounds hidden behind glamour and etiquette. Some operate as solitary hunters. Others insinuate themselves into the social folds of a district before anyone admits aloud that the problem has become aristocratic. They prefer control, manipulation, and pressure before open slaughter, largely because panic is messy and they despise mess they did not choose.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Regeneration**: Unless harmed by fire, certain sanctified forces, or comparable banes, a Vampire may recover 1 Wound at the start of a round or scene beat.
• **Charm Gaze**: Targets who meet its eyes may be compelled, softened, or delayed unless they test Presence successfully.
• **Mist Form**: Once per scene or fight, a Vampire may dissolve into mist, escaping ordinary physical assault and repositioning through gaps and cracks.
• **Predatory Precision**: Against isolated, fascinated, restrained, or socially compromised victims, the Vampire often gains Advantage.

Nightmare-Wight

Threat: 4
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Shadow Claws — 1d8+1 psychic or fear harm

Nightmare-Wights are born from fear with enough persistence to wear a body. They drape themselves in torn shadows, their limbs lengthen into clawing silhouettes, and nearby lanterns dim as if trying to avoid involvement. Reflections warp around them. Mirrors resent them. Children dream them before adults see them. They do not simply kill; they arrive as an argument that terror was always going to win eventually.

These creatures appear near unstable Dream Passages, rooms saturated by repeated dread, nursery thresholds gone wrong, or district sites where fear was fed more carefully than bread. They stalk the weak-minded first, but they are no fools. A Nightmare-Wight prefers to split a group emotionally before splitting it physically.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fear Aura**: Anyone entering Reach or beginning a scene under its full attention must test Presence or suffer Disadvantage from mounting terror.
• **Dream Rend**: Once per fight, it may tear directly at a target's fear-state; on a failed test, the victim loses their next action to dread, freezing, or panic.
• **Shadow-Wrapped**: Dim light, reflections, and dream-heavy rooms often grant it Advantage or partial protection.
• **Predator of the Frightened**: It prefers the isolated, shaken, sleepless, and symbolically vulnerable.

HUMANOIDS

Familiar folk, hostile raiders, wandering clans, and creatures of culture and conflict.

Goblin

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Shiv, Sling Stone, or Hook Knife — 1d6

Quick, wiry, and perpetually halfway between commerce and trouble, Goblins enter Limbo in search of shiny objects, unsecured goods, cheap food, loose nails, unattended children's toys, or opportunities to improve their circumstances at someone else's expense. Their ears twitch constantly, their eyes catch low light like wet glass, and their conversation tends to come in either frantic chatter or suspicious silence.

Not all Goblins in Limbo are enemies, but even the friendlier ones are often structurally difficult to supervise. Hostile Goblin bands favor ambush, crowding, theft, and quick escape over fair battle. They are excellent nuisances and dangerous only until someone remembers they are also cowards with knives.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Pack Tactics:** Goblins gain Advantage when attacking a target already engaged, cornered, distracted, or surrounded.
• **Nimble Dodge:** They resist simple trap hazards and clumsy battlefield hazards better than their size suggests.
• **Quick to Flee:** If a leader drops or a plan fails obviously, many Goblins break morale fast.
• **Low-Light Sneaks:** Dark cluttered lanes, markets, and warrens often favor them.

Hobgoblin

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Longsword, Spear, or War Blade — 1d8+1

Hobgoblins are Goblin-kind with discipline hammered into them so hard it became culture. Taller, broader, and much less funny under pressure, they move with military precision and tend to look at Limbo as either a theater of opportunity or a logistical nuisance full of badly organized locals. Their armor is well-kept, their formations are practiced, and their scorn is usually earned slowly and expressed immediately.

They prefer proper lines, flanking discipline, shouted coordination, and clean tactical superiority. Even a small Hobgoblin presence in a district is often more dangerous than a much noisier Goblin gang, because Hobgoblins understand objectives. When they want a route, a gate, a bridge, or a cache, they usually know why.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Martial Discipline:** Hobgoblins gain Advantage when fighting in formation or under clear command.
• **Command Bark:** A Hobgoblin leader may grant nearby allies Advantage on one coordinated exchange.
• **Defensive Training:** They are difficult to push, panic, or disorganize with cheap tricks.
• **Professional Hostility:** Unlike Goblins, they rarely waste effort on mischief when a cleaner tactical cruelty is available.

Orc

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Battle Axe, Cleaver, or Heavy Chop — 1d10

Orcs arrive in Limbo for many reasons, not all of them immediately murderous. Some seek worthy challenge, some pursue prey, some raid, some trade, and some simply react to the place as if the whole realm were a promising argument waiting to happen. Broad-shouldered, loud, physically imposing, and often emotionally simpler than the trouble they cause, Orcs carry themselves like creatures to whom every corridor is either a test or an insult.

In battle they are direct, fierce, and often more honest than the politics around them. An Orc will usually tell you what they think and then try to prove it with an axe. That does not make them uncomplicated. It merely means their complications tend to arrive at running speed.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Brutal Strength**: Orc melee hits often gain bonus harm on strong Edge results.
• **Reckless Charge**: An Orc may commit to a violent rush, gaining a stronger opening attack while exposing themselves on the following exchange.
• **Fearless Momentum**: They resist intimidation from mere size or shouted confidence.
• **Challenge Instinct**: Mockery, provocation, or obvious boldness may pull them into suboptimal but personally satisfying fights.

Gnoll

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite, Hook Blade, or Ripper Spear — 1d8+1

Gnolls are hyena-folk with restless bodies, ugly humor, and the unnerving habit of sounding delighted just before someone gets hurt. Their fur is often matted with dust, blood, fungus pollen, or road grime; their ears twitch constantly; and their laughter carries through Limbo's stone corridors long before the pack itself appears. A wise Patrol learns to count that laughter very quickly.

They hunt in groups, enjoy pressure, and favor prey that already looks uncertain. In Limbo they often stalk outer districts, wild fungal belts, abandoned trade paths, and the edges of collapsed routes where scavenging becomes indistinguishable from predation.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Blood Frenzy**: Gnolls gain Advantage against visibly wounded or cornered foes.
• **Pack Cruelty**: They coordinate well around a target that has fallen prone, become isolated, or begun to panic.
• **Keen Scent**: Concealment through smell, blood, or

fear rarely fools them for long.
• **Laughter of the Pack**: Their shrieking amusement can unsettle civilians, mounts, and the already nervous.

Gnome

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Tinker Wand, Pocket Device, or Improvised Gadget — 1d4 or scene effect

Gnomes in Limbo are often accidental visitors, experimental nuisances, ingenious meddlers, or deeply charming hazards in good boots. Small, bright-eyed, and cursed with curiosity strong enough to damage property, they enter the realm pursuing inventions, magical hypotheses, or extremely irresponsible questions. Their clothing is usually excellent until the explosion.

Most Gnomes are not hostile, but many are dangerous in exactly the same way a crowded workshop full of unstable prototypes is dangerous: not out of malice, but because they believe consequences can always be adjusted after observation. Limbo gives them entirely too much to observe.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Creative Spark**: Gnomes often gain Advantage on improvised problem-solving, jury-rigging, and opportunistic use of odd devices.
• **Gizmo Burst**: Once per scene, a Gnome may produce a small useful or inconvenient mechanism that alters the exchange.
• **Dimensionally Unhelpful Curiosity**: A Gnome may willingly investigate the exact thing wiser people are backing away from.
• **Fragile But Busy**: They are poor front-line combatants, but excellent scene disruptors.

Kobold

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Sling, Tiny Spear, or Trap Knife — 1d6

Kobolds are little reptilian scavengers with quick hands, nervous pride, and a cultural commitment to hoarding anything vaguely shiny, metallic, magical, or dragon-adjacent. Their eyes gleam in the dark, their movements are bird-fast when alarmed, and they can make a simple tunnel system feel deeply personal in under an hour.

In Limbo they favor narrow passages, scrap-rich warrens, broken vaults, and old routes where useful junk can be claimed and hidden before anything larger notices. They are skittish in open battle but infuriatingly dangerous in prepared territory.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Trap Sense**: Kobolds gain Advantage on avoiding, setting, or navigating simple traps and crawl hazards.
• **Tactical Retreat**: Once pressured hard, a Kobold may disengage or vanish into narrow terrain with insulting speed.
• **Warren Defender**: Confined tunnels, scrap chambers, and tight spaces often favor them heavily.
• **Dragon-Obsession**: References to dragons, treasure, or ancestral hoards may distract, inspire, or completely ruin their tactical focus.

Ogre

Threat: 3
Wounds: 6
Armor: 1
Attack: Club, Fist, or Ground-Pounding Kick — 1d10+2

Ogres are large enough that rooms become planning problems when they enter them. Thick-limbed, broad-faced, slow-thinking, and often accidentally destructive even in peaceful moods, they wander into Limbo through food-linked, laughter-linked, or simply careless portals, usually following sounds, smells, or vague feelings they mistake for hospitality. They are monstrous in size, but not always in intent.

That said, an Ogre that feels threatened, hungry, or manipulated becomes a civic emergency very quickly. Their great advantage is not subtlety but mass. They can crack doors, splinter stalls, break stairs, uproot improvised cover, and turn careful district arrangements into wood chips with astonishing efficiency.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Ground Pound:** A strong slam may force nearby targets to test Grace or be knocked prone, staggered, or thrown against scenery.
• **Large and Stubborn:** Ogres are difficult to push, pin, or move by ordinary force.
• **Simple Appetite:** Food, trickery, and obvious bait can sometimes redirect them better than courage can.
• **Accidental Devastation:** Even low-precision misses may still damage the room.

Troll

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 1
Attack: Claws or Rend — 1d10

Trolls are long-limbed, rawboned, and built out of the sort of flesh that appears to take injury as a personal challenge. Their hides hang in ugly folds, their mouths open too wide, and their eyes gleam with the patient confidence of things that have survived being cut in half by less disciplined people. They smell like wet stone, old blood, and bad choices.

In Limbo they roam caves, ruined drainage routes, wild terraces, and damp places where prey comes through singly and unwisely. A Troll does not need to be brilliant to be terrifying. Regeneration covers many educational weaknesses.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Regeneration:** Unless harmed by fire, acid, or another clearly established bane, Trolls recover 1 Wound at the start of the round or scene beat.
• **Rend:** A Troll that wins strongly at Reach may inflict increased harm through tearing force.
• **Territorial Hunger:** Trolls defend feeding grounds and favored tunnels with ugly persistence.
• **Hard to Discourage:** Pain alone is rarely enough to make a Troll retreat.

Hill Giant

Threat: 4
Wounds: 7
Armor: 1
Attack: Club, Fist, or Boulder Toss — 1d10+2

Hill Giants in Limbo are disasters with opinions. Immense, broad, dull-witted, and strong enough to make architecture feel theoretical, they stumble in through wide or unstable portals and react to the realm with a mix of curiosity, appetite, and catastrophic misunderstanding. They often see Creeps as small peculiar animals until a Creep does something memorable enough to change the category.

Giants are rarely subtle threats. They break what they stand on, grab what interests them, and throw what annoys them. Their presence turns ordinary district problems into evacuation problems.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Sweeping Swing**: A Hill Giant may strike multiple nearby targets or threaten a whole narrow lane with one broad swing.
• **Boulder Toss**: At Near or Far, the Giant may hurl loose stone, debris, or furniture as a ranged attack.
• **Huge Frame**: Small cover often does not meaningfully protect against their attacks.
• **Distractible**: Clever misdirection, food, spectacle, or insult may sometimes pull their attention violently sideways.

Stone Giant

Threat: 5
Wounds: 8
Armor: 2
Attack: Stone Hammer, Crushing Fist, or Avalanche Stomp — 1d10+3

Stone Giants are more thoughtful than their hill-born cousins and therefore, in some contexts, significantly worse. Their bodies resemble living granite, their faces move with grave restraint, and their attention often settles on Limbo's strange mineral formations, root-stone seams, and portal-scarred caverns with something like scholarly reverence. Unfortunately, they remain giants, and scholarship at that scale can still flatten a district.

A Stone Giant is often calm until a line is crossed: provocation, magical insult, trespass against a chosen site, or instability that it interprets as vandalism against stone itself. Then the mountain has feelings, and those feelings are structurally expensive.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Rocky Hide**: Their Armor is significant against ordinary physical attack.
• **Avalanche Stomp**: A heavy stomp may drop debris, split footing, or force Grace tests from nearby foes.
• **Slow Deliberation**: Stone Giants do not usually rush—but when they commit, their actions are hard to interrupt.
• **Geological Attention**: Clever use of cave structure, old masonry, or damaged stonework may influence their choices.

FEY & FAERIE CREATURES

Glamoured folk, whispering spirits, mischievous sprites, noble tyrants, and things best left to the forests of the unreal.

Fairy

Thre: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Glitter Sting — 1d4

Fairies are tiny winged folk with luminous skin, bright insectile motion, and the emotional stability of sparks in a dry attic. Their bodies glow in shifting shades—

candle-gold, foxfire green, bruised violet, moth-blue—and their laughter tends to sound delightful until it happens directly behind your ear while you are balancing on something unsafe. They are beautiful in the way very small weather is beautiful.

In Limbo, Fairies arrive through Dream Passages, hidden gardens, old nursery routes, moonlit wardrobe seams, and any place where wonder has gone slightly feral. Some are merely curious. Some are acquisitive little thieves. Some attach themselves to districts, children, or abandoned corners and act as if the locals have always owed them tribute. Even friendly Fairies are unreliable. A Fairy that likes you may still ruin your whole afternoon for artistic reasons.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Tiny Flyer:** Fairies are difficult to pin, corner, or strike cleanly with heavy weapons in open air.
• **Glamour Dust:** They gain Advantage in distraction, charm, and playful misdirection against the unwary.
• **Dazzle Burst:** Once per scene, a Fairy may flash with sudden light; nearby targets test Presence or Awareness or suffer Disadvantage on their next action.
• **Mercurial Mood:** Fairies may shift from help to sabotage based on insult, whim, or perceived discourtesy.

Fae Noble

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Glamoured Blade — 1d8+2

A Fae Noble looks like elegance taught itself how to become dangerous. Tall, beautiful, and wrong in ways that only fully register after too much eye contact, they move as though Limbo is a provincial inconvenience and every room they enter should apologize for its proportions. Their garments ripple like living dusk, frost, petals, or lacquered smoke depending on court and mood, and their speech carries the unnerving precision of a thing that has never once mistaken a promise for kindness.

In Limbo, Fae Nobles arrive as envoys, hunters, debt-collectors, petitioners, seducers, meddlers, or wandering tyrants of local scale. They treat Dream Passages as roads, bargains as architecture, and mortal fear as one of several acceptable currencies. Their danger lies not only in violence, but in the fact that they often prefer not to begin there.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Glamour Aura:** Attacks and social pressure against a Fae Noble often suffer Disadvantage unless the attacker pierces the glamour through will, lore, or symbolic advantage.
• **Courtly Sorcery:** A Fae Noble may command illusion, charm, compulsion, or subtle battlefield displacement.
• **Binding Word:** Promises, names, and spoken concessions matter dangerously around them.
• **Alien Poise:** Panic, ordinary ugliness, and social confusion rarely unsettle them.

Elf

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Longbow or Moonlit Blade — 1d8

Elves move through Limbo like cautious guests who are too graceful to look fully uncomfortable. Long-lived, elegant, and keenly observant, they carry moon-touched reserve in their faces and tend to regard the realm with equal measures of fascination, caution, and mild aesthetic disapproval. Their eyes catch dim light cleanly, their hair and gear are often worked with symbols of forest, sky, or memory, and even their silences feel intentional.

Some Elves enter Limbo to study strange crossings, hunt dangerous beasts, retrieve lost relics, or negotiate with fae powers who no longer answer to safer woodland etiquette. Others arrive by accident and instantly become the most formally dressed people in a fungus cave. They are usually capable, often distant, and sometimes unhelpfully proud.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Keen Senses**: Elves gain Advantage on noticing hidden motion, distant sound, and subtle environmental wrongness.
• **Moon Step**: Once per scene, an Elf may shift a short distance in a blink of silver light or uncanny speed.
• **Composed Archer**: They excel at ranged combat where timing and calm matter.
• **Old Reserve**: Social pressure, confusion, and panic rarely make them sloppy, though they may become condescending instead.

Satyr

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Headbutt, Hoof Kick, or Short Blade — 1d6+1

Satyrs are merry, sharp-toothed, bright-eyed creatures of hooves, laughter, and emotional irresponsibility. Their horns vary from subtle curves to splendid branching displays, their clothes range from festival finery to artistic ruin, and they smell pleasantly of wine, leaf-mold, smoke, and whatever trouble was nearby before they arrived. They move with dancer's balance and a prankster's absolute refusal to leave tension untouched.

In Limbo, Satyrs often drift in through revel-linked passages, fae roads, abandoned feast sites, and old performance halls that should have stayed locked after dark. They can be generous, inspiring, flirtatious, disruptive, rude, unexpectedly brave, and catastrophically poor at understanding that some situations are not improved by music.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Sure-Footed**: Satyrs gain Advantage against knockdown, bad footing, and balance-based hazards.
• **Piping Trick**: Through music or rhythm, a Satyr may

charm, distract, or emotionally sway a nearby target for a brief but useful moment.
• **Revel Instinct**: Crowds, parties, festivals, and emotionally heightened scenes often favor them.
• **Prank Logic**: Satyrs are hard to predict because they think upsetting the obvious plan is often the honest thing to do.

Dryad

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Vine Lash or Thorned Touch — 1d8

Dryads are tree-bound spirits in bark-skinned, root-veined forms that hover uneasily between beauty and botanical menace. Their hair may fall as leaves, moss, or flowering branch tips; their voices sound like wind through old wood; and their stillness can be more unnerving than movement. Some appear as solemn forest guardians, others as strange rooted persons wearing a human shape the way ivy wears a wall.

They are uncommon in Limbo, appearing mainly where Dream Passages open into deep forests, ancient groves, or overgrown holy sites. Dryads tend to be patient until something harms living green things in front of them. Then patience becomes memory, and memory becomes wrath.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Plantkin**: Dryads ignore poison and many plant-based hazards, but fire and similar consuming harm strike them with terrible efficiency.
• **Root Snare**: A Dryad may command roots, vines, or plant matter to seize a target and hold them fast.
• **Guardian of Green**: They fight more fiercely when defending living groves, sacred growth, or wounded natural spaces.
• **Slow Mercy**: Dryads often offer warning before violence—but only once.

Sprite

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Needle Rapier or Sleep Stinger — 1d4+1

Sprites are smaller, sharper, and much less cuddly than people who have never met them assume. With dragonfly or glass-veined wings, bright quick eyes, and the martial indignation of tiny beings who are completely certain of their sovereignty, Sprites guard flower hollows, hidden ledges, old wardrobes, and impossibly small territories with absurd seriousness.

In Limbo, they cluster around secret gardens, hidden light wells, old passage seams, and dream-grown pockets of private beauty. They are loyal, territorial, proud, and prone to viewing much larger creatures as suspicious furniture with opinions.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Blinding Speed**: Sprites are extremely hard to hit cleanly in open flight.
• **Sleep Stinger**: Once per scene, a Sprite may deliver a sting that imposes drowsiness, slowed reaction, or momentary heaviness on a failed test.
• **Tiny Duelist**: They excel at harrying larger foes from difficult angles.
• **Territorial Fury**: A Sprite defending its chosen space behaves with alarming courage.

Thorn-Goblin

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Thorn Claws — 1d6+1

Thorn-Goblins are fae-goblin things wrapped in brambles, creeping vine growth, and burr-clotted mischief. Their skin shows in barky green-brown patches beneath thorn mats, their eyes gleam through leaves or moss, and they move with the quick scamper of creatures who know every root and rotten log personally. They smell like wet hedges and unpleasant surprises.

In Limbo they favor fungal forests, moss tunnels, overgrown service ways, and any district corner the gardeners have decisively lost. They are ambushers, thieves, and local tyrants of shrub-level scale. Their idea of fairness begins and ends with whether they were the first to hide in the hedge.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Natural Camouflage**: Thorn-Goblins gain Advantage on concealment in overgrowth, moss, root tangles, and neglected green spaces.
• **Needle Burst**: Once per scene, they may shake loose or fling a spray of thorns at nearby foes.
• **Snaring Growth**: They use terrain aggressively, steering enemies into bramble, fungus pits, and root traps.
• **Petty Territoriality**: They are much bolder on familiar ground.

Velvet Envoy

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Fae Rapier — 1d8+1

A Velvet Envoy is a courtly fae emissary dressed in iridescent fabric, impossible tailoring, and enough controlled menace to make every conversation feel like an invitation to either dance or ruin. Their smiles are elegant, their manners exquisite, and their shadows often lag half a second behind the rest of them as if still negotiating the terms of reality. They speak beautifully and mean exactly what they choose, which is rarely the comforting thing.

These Envoys appear in Limbo as negotiators, manipulators, social hunters, or representatives of courts that consider diplomacy merely a slower form of conquest. They are dangerous because they can read a room, bend a conversation, and kill a fool without changing posture.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Glamoured Presence**: Social actions against an Envoy often suffer Disadvantage unless the speaker is notably composed or well-informed.
• **Social Mirror**: Once per scene, an Envoy may reflect a social pressure tactic back onto its source.
• **Refined Blade Work**: They excel at precision, timing, and humiliatingly neat violence.
• **Court Manipulator**: Bargains, insults, etiquette, and public embarrassment are battlefield tools to them.

Dream-Changeling

Threat: 3
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Wisp Fingers or Dream-Touch — 1d8 psychic

Dream-Changelings are half-formed fae beings whose bodies flicker through possible identities like a room trying on faces. Their outlines shift, their voices slide in and out of remembered tones, and their features often resemble someone the viewer almost knows well enough to trust. They are not stable creatures, but they are often very good at pretending stability is overrated.

They gather around unstable Dream Passages, emotionally saturated districts, old nursery routes, and places where imagination has too much architectural influence. Some are playful and lost. Others are predatory. Most are both at different points in the same conversation.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Minor Shapeshift**: A Dream-Changeling may alter its appearance enough to pass briefly, unsettle, or lure.
• **Mirror Form**: Once per scene, it may mimic a target's outline and gain Advantage on confusion, pursuit, or one defensive exchange against that target.
• **Dream-Touched Mind**: It manipulates emotional expectation more easily than ordinary force.
• **Unstable Identity**: Strong symbolic pressure, true names, or emotional certainty may disrupt its false forms.

Boogeyman

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Long Fingers or Shadow Grasp — 1d8+1

Boogeymen are tall, crooked creatures of shadow, dread, and domestic architecture gone wrong. They seem made of corners, coat-racks, under-bed darkness, and the certainty every child has felt at least once that something in the room is pretending not to exist until the blanket slips. Their limbs are too long, their fingers too thin, and their glowing eyes have the discourteous habit of appearing exactly where a room should be safest. Their movements are jerky when observed directly and disturbingly smooth when half-seen in the edge of lantern light.

In Limbo, Boogeymen haunt Closetways, nursery thresholds, abandoned sleeping quarters, family homes built too close to dream-thin walls, and old districts where fear has had generations to settle into the boards. They are ambush predators, emotional opportunists, and connoisseurs of badly timed silence. A Boogeyman prefers to frighten before it kills. It enjoys making a victim understand the problem a heartbeat too early to keep their dignity.

Not every Boogeyman is equally violent. Some are skulking nuisance-haunters content to feed on startlement and tension. Others are full nightmare predators, patient enough to stalk a household, route, or district until someone finally opens the wrong door at the wrong hour. Many older Creeps have stories about them. None of those stories have ever improved bedtime policy.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Jump-Scare**: Once per fight, a Boogeyman may force a target within sight to test Presence. On a failure, the victim loses their next main action to shock, panic, or full-body refusal.

• **Shadowform**: In dim interiors, closet spaces, under-furniture dark, and other cramped shadows, the

Boogeyman gains Advantage on concealment, pursuit, and first strike.

• **Corner Predator**: It gains Advantage when attacking from concealment, from behind furniture, through hanging cloth, or from symbolic "safe" places such as beds, wardrobes, or nursery doors.

• **Fear-Feeder**: The more frightened a target becomes, the bolder the Boogeyman grows. Against shaken, isolated, or panicked victims, it often gains Advantage.

BEASTS

Claws, fur, fangs, and instincts sharpened by nature... or occasionally by the strange airs of Limbo.

House Cat

Threat: 0
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Claws or Bite — 1d4

A House Cat in Limbo remains, with infuriating consistency, a House Cat. Small, elegant, suspicious, and governed by private principles that no one has ever fully mapped, cats pass through Closetways and loose Dream seams with insulting ease. Their eyes shine in fungus-glow and lantern light, their paws make almost no sound when they wish them not to, and they display the same royal contempt for danger they display for breakfast delays. This would be charming if it did not so often lead them directly into scenes other beings are trying very hard to survive.

Some become district mascots, shrine pests, pantry thieves, or quiet companions to old Vigil posts. Others adapt to Limbo entirely too well, growing comfortable among odd little guardians and odder little monsters until nobody can remember whether they came from the Human World or were simply always there, waiting for someone to invent cushions. Cats often sense dream pressure, hidden movement, and bad rooms before people do. Unfortunately, this insight is rarely accompanied by any useful commitment to warning others in comprehensible ways.

They are not serious battlefield threats except to dignity, curtains, and unsecured alchemical apparatus. Even so, a frightened or cornered cat can turn a stealth scene into a tragedy of noise, claws, and exposed ankles in seconds.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Tiny and Quick**: House Cats are difficult to grab, corner, or hit cleanly in cramped or cluttered spaces.

• **Pounce**: From concealment, height, or stillness, a cat may strike with surprising speed and force for its size.

• **Night-Sighted**: Darkness, dim rooms, and low lantern conditions rarely hinder a cat's senses.

• **Cat Logic**: A cat may notice useful things long before anyone else, but whether it helps is a separate and deeply theological question.

Domestic Dog

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite — 1d6

Dogs who enter Limbo remain recognizably dogs: loyal, noisy, brave, anxious, affectionate, suspicious, overeager, and utterly convinced that the correct response to mystery is either barking or standing between it and someone they love. They vary enormously by breed, size, and temperament, but almost all adapt to Limbo by choosing a person, post,

or route to care about and then making that concern everybody's problem. Their body language is immediate, their emotions are honest, and their willingness to trust a kind hand often makes them beloved in districts that have too little uncomplicated devotion.

In practical terms, a domestic dog in Limbo is both an asset and a complication. Dogs can track, alert, comfort, guard, and disrupt hidden threats before a Patrol notices them. They are also catastrophic to stealth, deeply vulnerable to fear-fed horrors, and prone to pursuing things larger than common sense should allow. Many Vigil posts tolerate or even quietly maintain unofficial kennel arrangements for precisely this reason: a good dog hears the wrong scratching first.

Dogs are not built for the elaborate weirdness of Limbo, but many of them refuse to care, which is often the most admirable and least tactically helpful thing about them.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Keen Hearing and Scent**: Dogs gain Advantage when detecting hidden movement, fresh trails, unfamiliar intruders, or the approach of danger by sound or smell.

• **Protective Bark**: A dog may raise alarm, bolster nearby allies against surprise, or interrupt a stealth approach simply by being a very committed dog.

• **Loyal Rush**: When defending a trusted handler, child, or familiar place, a dog may attack or interpose itself with startling courage.

• **Poor Stealth Asset**: A dog improves many situations except those where silence would have been nice.

Wolf

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite — 1d8

Wolves in Limbo carry the realm in their eyes: glinting lantern-light, damp patience, and the unnerving intelligence of predators that have learned new paths in old dark. Their coats range from ordinary wild greys and browns to pale ash, shadow-black, or silvered fur touched by strange fungal gleam. They move with efficient grace and very little wasted emotion. A wolf pack in Limbo does not make noise without reason. If they are letting you hear them, the scene has likely entered a stage they consider manageable.

They favor broken terraces, outer fungus belts, drainage caverns, ruined roads, and the neglected edges of districts where prey is inconsistent and hiding places are many. Wolves are not needlessly cruel, but they are opportunistic, territorial, and exact in the way pack hunters often are. They isolate the weak, test a line, circle an opening, and only commit when the odds begin looking properly disrespectful to their target.

A lone wolf is often a scout, a desperate hunter, or a sign that the others are not far. A pack is a social intelligence built out of hunger, discipline, and movement.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Pack Hunter**: Wolves gain Advantage when an ally also threatens, corners, or distracts the same target.

• **Howl**: A wolf may call the pack, unsettle prey, or push fear into a tense scene, especially among civilians, mounts, and the already uncertain.

• **Predator Motion**: Wolves reposition well, exploit retreat poorly defended, and use bad footing better than most prey ever wants to admit.

• **Territorial Stalkers**: They rarely rush a fight they can study first.

Bear

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Claw Swipe or Mauling Bite — 1d10

A Bear in Limbo is the kind of problem that makes all architecture feel temporary. Vast, shaggy, broad-backed, and strong enough to break useful things accidentally, bears stumble through woodland-linked Dream Passages, scent trails, and food-haunted breaches with the unfair confidence of creatures not accustomed to being told "no" by structures. Their breath steams, their paws crack boards and sink into soft growth, and their sheer physicality makes every room around them feel smaller than it was a moment ago.

Bears are not inherently malicious. They are, however, large enough that fear, pain, or surprise becomes a local disaster with almost no warning. A calm bear may be observed, redirected, or left alone with proper caution. A wounded or cornered bear becomes a scene-wide correction to anyone who thought the issue was under control. Limbo does not make them stranger so much as it gives them stranger places to be enormous.

Many district reports on bears are written in the tone of people who had very firm opinions about doorway width before the encounter and much more respectful ones afterward.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Thick Hide**: Bears reduce a fair amount of lesser physical harm through mass, muscle, and stubborn hide.

• **Maul**: On a strong successful exchange at Reach, a Bear may inflict additional tearing or crushing harm through sheer overpowering force.

• **Massive Presence**: Smaller animals, civilians, and weak-nerved targets often hesitate before closing with a Bear.

• **Reactive Temper**: Startle, wound, or trap a Bear and the rest of the scene will become much louder.

Lion

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite or Claws — 1d10

Lions enter Limbo through savanna-linked passages, sunlit dream routes, and stranger breaches that seem to have no business producing that much majesty at once. Their manes often carry faint dream-light in the dark, their eyes gleam with unapologetic predatory confidence, and their movements retain the poise of creatures convinced the world is improved by their presence. This is difficult to argue with at a distance and much less persuasive at Reach.

A lion in Limbo is all dignity until it is not. They are apex hunters, and even when disoriented by the realm's architecture, they carry themselves with the poise of creatures used to deciding which beings in a landscape deserve further discussion. Solitary lions often stalk, study, and commit only when advantage feels proper. Multiple lions in one district usually indicate a breach someone should have closed sooner or a Creepmaster who is making a point.

They are not naturally malicious, but they are fully comfortable being final.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Predator Instinct:** A Lion gains Advantage on the first decisive strike from concealment, patient approach, or a moment of hesitation in the prey.

• **Rending Pounce:** From a rush or leap, a Lion may inflict additional opening harm and force immediate loss of footing or control.

• **Majestic Threat:** Many ordinary creatures hesitate in the presence of a Lion unless already committed or cornered past reason.

• **Proud Hunter:** Once focused on prey, it dislikes losing initiative or being denied the kill.

Tiger

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 0
Attack: Claws or Savage Bite — 1d10+1

Tigers in Limbo are all hush, shadow, and focused violence. Their striped coats blur beautifully in dim fungal light, their steps vanish between sounds, and their shoulders roll with controlled force that feels almost elegant until the attack actually begins. Where lions announce majesty, tigers enforce presence through silence. A tiger encounter often starts with the realization that the scene had already been seen before the players understood they were being watched.

They haunt humid cavern forests, moss-grown ruins, thick overgrowth, half-drowned terraces, and long neglected garden routes. Tigers are solitary by preference, though a breeding pair or parent with young becomes a much more complicated environmental statement. They favor ambush, isolation, and clean bloody decisions. They are patient enough to wait for the wrong turn, the separated target, the unstable ladder, the child who drifted just a little too far from the adults.

A tiger does not roar to impress. It roars because the room now belongs to the part after stealth.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Ambusher:** Tigers gain Advantage on attacks from concealment, poor light, or strong positional superiority.

• **Savage Bite:** On a critical or strong Edge result, a Tiger's bite becomes especially ruinous and may immediately escalate the victim's physical crisis.

• **Silent Stalker:** They are exceptionally hard to detect before they choose to close.

• **Solitary Killer:** Tigers perform best when they can isolate a target from support, witnesses, or defensive formation.

Shark

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite — 1d10+1

A Shark in Limbo is funny for exactly one second, and only if no one has yet seen the water move. Once it does, all humor leaves the room. These creatures slip in through sea-linked passages, drowned thresholds, underground estuary seams, and blackwater breaches into reservoir caverns, canal basins, flooded ruins, and deep dim lakes beneath the city. Their shapes are all wrong for Limbo and yet far too right for whatever water they have found there.

In the water, sharks become almost abstract: a ripple, a pale underside, a fin, a vanished reflection, and then the immediate realization that somebody has been standing too close to the edge for the last several lines of conversation. Out of water they are badly limited, miserable, and awkward in a way almost pitiable enough to distract from what they become the instant someone helps them back in.

A shark does not hate you. It simply has no respect at all for the idea that your body ought to remain arranged as it currently is.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Water Apex:** In water, a Shark gains Advantage on pursuit, attack, and sudden strike, and is exceedingly difficult to outmaneuver without preparation.

• **Blood Sense:** Wounded creatures in or near the water are much easier for a Shark to locate and prioritize.

• **Land-Bound Weakness:** Out of water, the Shark is heavily limited in movement, control, and tactical options.

• **Territorial Circle:** Sharks often test prey with circling pressure before fully committing to attack.

Great Eagle

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Talons or Beak — 1d8+1

Great Eagles are broad-winged raptors large enough to make open shafts, terraces, and cliff gardens feel claimed the instant they pass overhead. Their feathers may be gold-brown, iron-dark, ash-grey, or moon-pale depending on origin and strange local adaptation, but their eyes always carry the same severe intelligence: the stare of a creature that understands height better than most thinking beings understand politics. A Great Eagle looks noble, which is useful, because it is often deciding whether you are worth speaking to or merely worth carrying.

In Limbo they favor Brightfall shafts, upper caverns, ruined towers, cliffside shrines, and any place where wide wings can still find real air. Some act as territorial predators. Others become guardians, messengers, or dangerous semi-allies to districts wise enough not to insult them. Their behavior often combines raptor practicality with a faint supernatural dignity that makes everyone else sound underdressed.

A Great Eagle is not a casual encounter. Even when not hostile, it alters the emotional altitude of a scene.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Keen Sight:** Great Eagles gain Advantage on spotting movement, weakness, or intrusion from high vantage.

• **Dive Attack:** From above, they may strike with sudden intensified force, often before the target fully understands the line of danger.

• **Aerial Superiority:** Reaching them cleanly while airborne is difficult without preparation, ranged pressure, or magical intervention.

• **Proud Temperament:** They respond strongly to disrespect, threats to nest or young, and attempts to command them like common animals.

Giant Boar

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Tusks or Gore Charge — 1d10+1

A Giant Boar looks like someone built a battering ram out of muscle, bristle, old mud, and spite. Thick-

necked, low-slung, broad-skulled, and wagon-heavy in the worst of them, these beasts root through fungal terraces, overgrown passage mouths, abandoned supply plots, and the edges of wild districts with single-minded appetite. Their tusks curve like agricultural threats, their little eyes glitter with insulted certainty, and they have never in recorded history improved because someone shouted at them.

A calm Giant Boar is already a difficult problem. A startled one becomes a charge-line with opinions. They do not bluff, posture, or negotiate in ways most civilized beings find useful. They lower the head and let the conversation become structural. More than one Patrol report has described a Boar attack as "less an animal behavior than a mobile refusal."

They are not clever, but they are forceful enough that clever people must work around them quickly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Boar Charge:** A straight-line rush can inflict greatly increased opening harm and may throw the target bodily out of position.

• **Thick Hide:** Lesser slashes, glancing impacts, and timid strikes often fail to matter much.

• **Stubborn Advance:** Boars are difficult to stop once committed to movement down a lane, hall, or root-cut.

• **Spook Response:** Loud noise, fire, pain, or confusion may turn a wary Boar instantly aggressive.

Mammoth Weasel

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite — 1d8+1

Mammoth Weasels thrive in the in-between places of Limbo: narrow passages, drainage cuts, abandoned crawl routes, storage tunnels, wall cavities, pipe-runs, fungus groves, and other places where they can vanish as quickly as they arrived. They are opportunistic omnivores, excellent scavengers, nest thieves, and deeply impolite little hunters when hungry. Some districts treat them as pests; others as unofficial mascots; a few reckless souls have tried domesticating them, usually with results best described as "temporarily educational."

Despite their size, Mammoth Weasels are not front-line brutes. Their danger lies in speed, unpredictability, and the way they use terrain. They dart through legs, burst from holes, seize loose objects, knock over supplies, and attack from angles that make larger creatures look clumsy. A single Mammoth Weasel is a nasty surprise. A breeding pair in a badly maintained tunnel system is a local governance issue.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Flexible Body:** Mammoth Weasels gain Advantage when escaping holds, slipping through confined routes, or repositioning through narrow terrain no sensible opponent can follow quickly.

• **Tunnel Frenzy:** Once per fight, a Mammoth Weasel may unleash a burst of rapid aggression, making two Bite attacks against the same target or two nearby targets at Reach.

• **Startle Predator:** If surprised, cornered, or suddenly threatened, it may immediately lunge, gaining Advantage on its first retaliatory attack. What looks like panic is often merely the beginning of a much worse decision for everyone involved.

• **Scavenger's Nerve:** Mammoth Weasels are strongly drawn to food, blood, carrion, glowing alchemical residue, and unsecured satchels. Clever Creeps can

bait, distract, or redirect them with suitable offerings—though this does rather encourage them to come back later with friends.

DRAGONS & MYTHIC BEASTS

Scaled legends, ancient predators, and impossible creatures dragged from folklore, omen, and half-remembered terror. Some are majestic. Some are monstrous.

Dragon (Small)

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 2
Attack: Bite — 1d10+1; Claws — 1d8

Young dragons in Limbo are roughly pony-sized, which is an adorable way of saying "still large enough to ruin a hallway and proud enough to try." Their scales shimmer with strange reflected color depending on lineage and recent mood—ember-red, storm-blue, pale frost, tarnished brass, wet green, or star-black—and their eyes carry that uniquely draconic mix of cunning, vanity, and immediate appetite. They move with feline confidence, reptilian patience, and the unnerving assumption that anything smaller than they are must be scenery, servant, or food until proven otherwise.

Small Dragons arrive through unstable sky-passages, treasure-linked tears, old hoard routes, and Dream Passages that should absolutely have been closed before anything winged and entitled learned their smell. Some are curious, almost playful in the destructive way of an overconfident child. Others are already tyrants in miniature, demanding tribute from districts, extorting smaller creatures, and treating hidden Limbo routes as personal hunting grounds. Their youth makes them impulsive rather than harmless.

A Small Dragon is often an excellent introduction to why older dragons are considered a regional crisis.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dragonhide:** Their scales provide strong natural Armor against ordinary weapons.

• **Mini-Breath:** Once per fight, a Small Dragon may exhale a short cone or burst of elemental force—fire, frost, lightning, acid, or another line-appropriate effect—inflicting 1d10 harm to those caught in it, reduced by appropriate protection if any exists.

• **Winged Pounce:** In open enough terrain, it may lunge, glide, or batter into a target with sudden aerial force.

• **Proud Young Tyrant:** Small Dragons are easily baited by insult, flattery, treasure, or challenge, often to their tactical inconvenience.

Dragon (Adult)

Threat: 5
Wounds: 9
Armor: 3
Attack: Bite — 1d12+2; Claws — 1d10+1; Tail — 1d10

An Adult Dragon does not merely enter a scene. It changes what the scene is about. Vast, scaled, winged, and carrying the kind of ancient self-certainty that makes architecture feel temporary, an Adult Dragon fills whole caverns with pressure before it has even spoken or attacked. Its scales can shine like worked metal, glacier glass, volcanic stone, deep gemstone, old bone, or midnight oil depending on breed and realm, and its voice lands in the room with the same authority as structural failure.

Adult Dragons do not usually stumble into Limbo by accident. If one is here, it has purpose. That purpose may be hunger, territory, sleep, hoard instinct, revenge, occult interest, a bargain, a challenge, an investigation, or the simple draconic belief that if a place is strange and unclaimed enough, it deserves inspection and possibly ownership. Many districts have myths about dragons. Few districts that have actually *had* one nearby retain much fondness for myth afterward.

An Adult Dragon is not just a monster. It is weather with ego, memory, and a legal theory about treasure.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dragonhide**: Adult Dragons possess heavy natural Armor and shrug off lesser physical attacks with contemptuous ease.

• **Breath Weapon**: Twice per fight, the Dragon may unleash a broad elemental blast, line, or cone inflicting 2d10 harm across multiple targets or a large area, adjusted to the exact type of dragon.

• **Fear Aura**: Creatures facing an Adult Dragon directly must often test Presence or suffer fear, hesitation, or immediate loss of offensive confidence.

• **Wing and Tail Supremacy**: Even when not biting, a Dragon can batter, sweep, scatter, or throw enemies and cover with sheer body control.

Dragon (Elder)

Threat: 6
Wounds: 12
Armor: 4
Attack: Bite — 2d10+2; Claws — 1d12+2; Tail — 1d10+2

An Elder Dragon is less a creature than a continuing argument for awe, fear, and tactical humility. These ancient beings carry scale patterns like constellations, stormfronts, frozen rivers, living magma, old gold, or polished darkness, and their faces have the terrible composure of entities that have watched entire peoples become history. When an Elder Dragon moves, it is with deliberate force. When it speaks, the room itself often seems to decide listening is prudent.

In Limbo, an Elder Dragon is not an encounter to be treated lightly or casually inserted because the session needed excitement. If one appears, the campaign has changed shape. It may have come for a passage no one else understands, a hoard distributed across realms, an old debt, a sleeping rival, a prophetic alignment, or simply because some transitive route brushed too close to something ancient and proud. Such beings often have motives that exceed immediate violence, but that rarely makes them less dangerous.

Even at rest, an Elder Dragon feels like the kind of power that civilizations build stories around to avoid having to fight it personally.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Legendary Resistance:** Once per scene or fight, an Elder Dragon may simply refuse a single effect, compulsion, or imposed condition that would meaningfully hinder it.

• **Cataclysm Breath:** Once per fight, it may release a devastating blast of elemental or realm-linked force inflicting 3d10 harm across a massive area or line.

• **Ancient Dread:** Most lesser beings must test nerve merely to function competently in its presence.

• **World-Weight Presence:** Its movement, roars, landings, and strikes may collapse cover, shake structures, scatter crowds, or advance scene Clocks even when not directly targeting them.

Wyvern

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Bite — 1d10; Stinger — 1d8+1 plus venom

Wyverns are lean, vicious dragon-kin with long necks, broad wings, narrow skulls, and tails ending in venomous stingers that make every aerial pass feel like an assassination attempt from natural history's least polite cousin. Unlike true dragons, wyverns usually lack the same old grandeur or patient tyranny. What they possess instead is speed, cruelty, and a deeply practical hunger that has no interest in speeches.

They haunt high shafts, exposed terraces, broken tower routes, canyon breaches, cliff passages, and the upper approaches to places travelers were hoping might remain peaceful. In Limbo they often nest where verticality gives them every advantage and the ground folk must either pass below or avoid whole routes. Wyverns are aggressive, territorial, and prone to striking first simply to see what kind of resistance the scene offers.

A Wyvern is what happens when a dragon loses most of its dignity and keeps all the useful parts.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Aerial Predator:** Wyverns gain Advantage when diving, striking from above, or attacking prey without proper overhead protection.

• **Venom Sting:** A successful tail strike may inflict poison, weakness, or escalating pain if the victim fails a resistance test.

• **Fly-By Harrier:** A Wyvern may attack and reposition in one fluid predatory pass if the terrain supports it.

• **Cruel Opportunist:** It prefers isolated, wounded, or poorly sheltered prey.

Manticore

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Claws — 1d10; Tail Spines — 1d8+1

Manticores are monstrous lion-bodied hunters with leathery wings, barbed tails, and unnervingly expressive near-human faces set just wrong enough to make every grin feel like a threat and every threat feel like a joke told at a funeral. Their voices can range from guttural mockery to fully articulate cruelty depending on the breed and mood, and they often enjoy conversation chiefly because it lets fear ripen before the first strike lands.

In Limbo, Manticores favor open caverns, ruined halls, broken plazas, terrace edges, and old road systems where they can see travelers coming and decide whether they prefer extortion, humiliation, or slaughter. They are theatrical predators. A Manticore does not merely attack if it can first taunt, frighten, or socially damage the prey in some more memorable fashion. This makes them very effective in scenes with weak morale, noisy witnesses, or victims who still believe words will solve anything.

They hunt for food, yes, but just as often for entertainment. That tends to worsen the reports.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Spine Volley**: Once per fight, a Manticore may launch multiple tail spines at one or several targets at Near or Far range.

• **Cruel Voice**: It may taunt, distract, or erode resolve through speech, especially against frightened or proud targets.

• **Winged Stalker**: Manticores combine aerial repositioning with ground mauling better than most creatures their size.

• **Sadistic Confidence**: They gain Advantage when a target is already shaken, isolated, or publicly embarrassed.

Griffon

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Talons or Beak — 1d10+1

Griffons are majestic and deeply dangerous creatures, all eagle front and lion rear, with broad wings, hooked beaks, powerful foretalons, and the bearing of predators who also believe in standards. They look like heraldry that learned to hunt, and there is something unnerving about how naturally they seem to fit both mountain sky and old ceremonial imagination. Their plumage and fur vary by region, but even the most mud-dark specimen carries a noble severity that makes ordinary scavengers seem socially inadequate.

In Limbo they favor high shafts, cliff gardens, lofty ruins, old towers, and aerie sites with open access to sky or sky-like cavern space. Griffons may be wild, territorial beasts, but some are intelligent enough to form working relationships, temporary alliances, or very selective tolerances with worthy folk. Even so, a nest, egg, or young griffon will turn almost any conversation into a violence scene.

A Griffon can be a mount, omen, guardian, or battle problem depending entirely on who reached it first and how foolish they were about introductions.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Keen Sight:** Griffons gain Advantage on spotting intruders, prey, or distant movement.

• **Snatch:** A strong successful attack may allow a Griffon to seize and lift a smaller target into the air or off secure footing.

• **Dive Dominance:** They gain Advantage when descending from height into an attack.

• **Nest Fury:** Griffons become especially relentless when defending mates, eggs, or chicks.

Basilisk

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Bite — 1d8+1

The Basilisk is a low, heavy reptilian horror with rough-scaled hide, a broad venomous mouth, and eyes that seem dull right up until they are very much not. Its body is built more for sudden brutal movement than elegance, and its gaze carries that deeply unfair kind of danger that bypasses armor, courage, and most preferences. There is nothing ceremonial about it. The Basilisk is a practical nightmare with scales.

In Limbo it lurks in darker tunnels, ruined courts, cracked cistern passages, mushroom forests, and deep stone places where motion is easier to notice than shape. The ground around one often shows the evidence first: half-petrified vermin, frozen vine growth, stiffened fungus blooms, and the occasional statue that was definitely not carved on purpose. Basilisks prefer ambush and surprise, but they are perfectly willing to press forward once prey starts making the useful mistake of panicking.

A Basilisk encounter is rarely long. It is decided quickly, usually by whether anyone remembered not to stare.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Petrifying Gaze:** A target meeting the Basilisk's eyes must test to resist magical stiffening. Failure may inflict slowed motion, escalating rigidity, or full petrification if the scene and repeated exposure allow it.

• **Stone-Blood Predator:** Basilisks resist many lesser poisons and environmental hazards.

• **Ambush Reptile:** They gain Advantage when attacking from stillness, shadow, rubble, or fungus cover.

• **Motion Drawn:** Sudden movement tends to pull their full predatory attention.

Chimera

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 1
Attack: Lion Head — 1d10; Goat Head — 1d8; Dragon Head — 1d8 fire

A Chimera is an argument against natural order conducted at full volume. Lion, goat, and dragon fused

into one hateful composite body, it moves with the violent indecision of three predators forced to share an opinion about legs. Its lion head leads with hunger, its goat head with twitching malice or absurd belligerence, and its dragon head with the cool certainty that setting the scene on fire may clarify matters. Their arguments with one another are not always audible, but one gets the sense they are ongoing.

In Limbo, Chimeras emerge through unstable beast-realms, old sorcerous breaches, and places where magical experimentation once received criminally poor supervision. They haunt badlands, broken terraces, fungal wilds, and outer routes where their mixed appetites can be satisfied without immediate civic retaliation. No one who has actually seen a Chimera ever again uses the phrase "single target" with comfort.

A Chimera is not subtle, but it is versatile in all the worst ways.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Triple Strike:** In a full committed exchange, a Chimera may attack with multiple heads, splitting pressure or focusing it brutally.

• **Dragon Breath:** Its draconic head may exhale flame in a short burst or cone once per fight.

• **Multi-Headed Awareness:** Chimeras are difficult to flank, distract, or deceive through ordinary positioning alone.

• **Contradictory Temper:** Clever manipulation of one head's instincts may disrupt the body's overall judgment, though doing so nearby remains a poor lifestyle choice.

Hydra (5-Headed)

Threat: 5
Wounds: 8
Armor: 2
Attack: Five Bites — 1d8 each

A Hydra is a mass of scaled flesh, thick limbs, swamp muscle, and too many serpentine heads snapping on long necks with relentless appetite. Each head has its own small malice, its own rhythm of attention, and its own ability to turn a manageable problem into several at once. Their eyes gleam from mud, reed, canal darkness, or dream-swamp pools like lanterns left in all the wrong places. The body beneath them is broad, ugly, and built to keep the whole nightmare moving forward through terrain others were already struggling to walk through.

Hydras enter Limbo through swamp-linked passages, drowned rupture-zones, old ritual marshes, and magical accidents involving too much hunger and not enough planning. They claim flooded ruins, blackwater caverns, algae-thick terrace pools, and stagnant outer districts nobody visits after dusk if they have inherited any sense at all. A Hydra does not fight elegantly. It overwhelms through persistence, reach, and the cruel arithmetic of multiple mouths.

More than one Patrol has learned that "we cut one head off" is only reassuring in stories told by people who stopped the account too early.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Multi-Headed Assault:** A Hydra may direct multiple attacks across several nearby targets or focus them on a single trapped victim.

• **Regeneration:** Unless fire or another established bane is applied correctly, the Hydra recovers Wounds rapidly over the course of a fight.

• **Severed Head Split**: If a head is destroyed without proper cauterizing or baneful force, it may regrow—sometimes worse than before.

• **Water and Marsh Dominance**: In swamp, flood, or deep water terrain, a Hydra is even harder to outmaneuver and control.

Nightmare (Steed)

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Flame Hooves — 1d8+1 fire

A Nightmare is a horse-shaped terror of smoke, soot, ember-light, and infernal momentum. Its mane burns without being consumed, its eyes glow like banked furnace coals, and every hoofprint it leaves looks like the floor has briefly remembered a worse world. It is beautiful in the way wild fire is beautiful from very far away and morally indefensible up close. Its scream sounds like a horse trying to neigh through a chimney.

Nightmares appear in Limbo when dark sorcerers, infernal breaches, pale riders, or badly misjudged summoning routes cut too near the realm. Some arrive mounted. Others run loose. The latter are often more difficult, because a rider at least suggests intention. An unbound Nightmare simply becomes velocity with malice. It races through streets, caverns, and black roads with supernatural certainty, scattering weaker beings and igniting scenes that had enough problems already.

Though classed as a steed, a Nightmare is fully capable of being the principal threat in its own right.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fire Aura**: Creatures engaging a Nightmare at Reach risk minor burning harm simply from proximity unless protected.

• **Flame Step**: Once per scene or fight, a Nightmare may vanish in a burst of smoke and reappear a short distance away, often leaving scorched ground or confusion behind.

• **Infernal Gallop**: In open lanes, roads, or broad corridors, it gains Advantage on charge, pursuit, and breakthrough actions.

• **Dark Master's Bond**: If actively ridden or commanded by a strong evil will, a Nightmare becomes more disciplined and tactically dangerous.

DEMONS, DEVILS & DARK SPIRITS

Malice with shape, hunger with language, and old wickedness given claws, contracts, or a whispering voice in the dark. Some tempt. Some torment.

Imp

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2

Armor: 0
Attack: Needle Bite or Claw — 1d6

Imps are tiny winged pests with needle teeth, hook claws, expressive ears, and the sort of mean little intelligence that thrives on opportunities too small or stupid for larger devils to bother with. Their skin ranges from ember-red to soot-black, ash-grey, or sickly violet depending on origin, and their eyes shine with delighted bad intent. They smell faintly of smoke, hot metal, and whatever was just stolen.

In Limbo, Imps slip through weak infernal seams, cracked wards, attic breaches, ritual mistakes, and all the little spiritual oversights that people insist are "probably fine" right up until the cutlery starts moving on its own. They are pranksters in the most malicious theological sense. An Imp enjoys lies, petty sabotage, theft, embarrassment, and setting one person's bad mood against another's until the room becomes useful to darker forces.

By themselves, they are nuisances with teeth. In numbers, or as heralds to something worse, they become the sort of nuisance the Vigil has to document twice.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Devilish Prank**: Once per scene, an Imp may impose Disadvantage on a target's next action through distraction, mockery, theft, or sudden interference.

• **Tiny Flyer**: Imps are hard to pin down or strike cleanly in cluttered three-dimensional space.

• **Fire-Touched**: Minor fire and heat rarely trouble them, and they often treat open flame as decorative encouragement.

• **Coward's Survival**: An Imp flees quickly when badly hurt unless it believes a stronger infernal force is watching.

Minor Demon

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Claws — 1d8+1

Minor Demons are compact embodiments of aggression: horned, fang-mouthed, burning-eyed creatures with charred skin, taloned hands, and all the emotional nuance of a kicked furnace. Their shapes vary by realm—some lean and doglike, some squat and toadish, some almost humanoid in ways that would be more comforting if they were less obviously eager to tear someone apart. They are not grand infernal personages. They are the rank-and-file appetite of hellish malice.

In Limbo they come through corrupted portals, infernal tears, botched summonings, or places where fear, blood, and magical carelessness overlapped long enough to create a route. Minor Demons are drawn to noise, magic, conflict, and scenes where something already feels close to breaking. They are direct, brutal, and often too eager to preserve themselves for long-term planning.

A Minor Demon is less frightening than a devil with a contract, but only in the sense that a knife wound is less complicated than blackmail.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Hell Spark**: Once per fight, a Minor Demon may release a burst of fire or cinder-force around itself, inflicting 1d6 harm in close proximity.

• **Fire Resistance**: Lesser heat, cinders, and ordinary flame affect them less than living creatures.

• **Cruel Momentum**: They gain Advantage when pressing frightened, smaller, or already-injured foes.

• **Radiant Vulnerability**: Consecrated, sanctified, or symbolically pure forces often strike them more effectively than ordinary steel.

Lesser Devil

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Barbed Fork or Tail Strike — 1d8+1

Lesser Devils are infernal intelligences wearing polished menace. Red-skinned, horned, elegant or severe depending on station, they carry themselves with the infuriating composure of beings who believe every conversation is a staircase and they are already one step above you. Their voices are smooth, their smiles are negotiative, and their eyes possess the distinct and revolting brightness of creatures that regard ethics as a resource management problem.

In Limbo, Lesser Devils usually arrive with purpose: to bargain, collect, tempt, corrupt, exploit instability, recruit the desperate, or oversee smaller infernal incursions with bureaucratic patience. Unlike Minor Demons, a Lesser Devil prefers leverage before violence. It will flatter, frighten, divide, and tempt if doing so produces cleaner results than open bloodshed. Unfortunately, it is usually very good at this.

The first mistake most people make with a Lesser Devil is assuming the conversation is not already combat.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Infernal Bargain**: A Lesser Devil may offer a tempting agreement whose terms favor it hideously unless challenged with strong will, lore, or caution.

• **Charm Immunity**: Simple emotional manipulation, glamour, or weak coercive charm rarely sways it.

• **Fork and Tail Discipline**: It combines positional control with puncturing strikes, especially against overcommitted opponents.

• **Contract Mind**: It gains Advantage in scenes involving promises, technical wording, desperation, or moral compromise.

Shadow

Threat: 2
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0 (special)
Attack: Chill Touch — 1d8 cold or draining harm

A Shadow is not merely darkness. It is darkness that has decided to detach. Thin, fluttering, person-shaped and unfinished, these beings creep across walls, floors, and ceilings like living stains trying to remember where they once belonged. Their edges tremble, their movements are too smooth when the lantern light flickers, and they carry an immediate drop in warmth with them as if the room itself is flinching.

In Limbo, Shadows gather in forgotten corners, abandoned posts, old schools, collapsed chapels, lamp-failed streets, and anywhere fear and neglect left enough psychic residue for a shape to persist. They feed on vitality, confidence, warmth, and motion. Left unchecked, they can turn a merely gloomy room into a place where even seasoned Creeps find themselves speaking more quietly for reasons they do not fully trust.

A Shadow is not loud. That is part of the problem.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Incorporeal**: Ordinary mundane weapons struggle to damage a Shadow unless supported by magical force, strong symbolism, or proper preparation.

• **Strength Drain**: A successful chill touch may impose weakness, heaviness, or reduced physical force until the victim recovers.

• **Vulnerable to Bright Light**: Strong illumination, sanctified radiance, or sudden brilliant flare may hinder or disperse a Shadow.

• **Wall-Skimmer**: Terrain means little to it unless the space is brightly exposed or ritually protected.

Dark Servitor

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Slashing Hands — 1d8+1

Dark Servitors are the obedient limbs of other evils: long-limbed, hollow-faced, narrow-bodied things with stretched fingers, bent joints, and the posture of creatures that learned to move by watching people they hated. Their skin may be grey, bruised, blackened, or wax-pale depending on origin, and their mouths often hang slightly open as if they have forgotten what speech was for. They are not elegant monsters. They are tools that have learned malice from the hand that used them.

In Limbo they come through corrupted passages, infernal service routes, necromantic households, and cult-managed thresholds, usually attached to a master, rite, or greater plan. Servitors are dangerous because they are relentless and because they often appear in numbers. One Servitor is a threat. Six of them means something with actual authority is nearby or expected.

There is something particularly hateful about enemies that do not scream, boast, or posture. Dark Servitors simply arrive and begin the work.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Terror Grasp**: A successful close attack may force the victim to test Presence or become briefly Frightened, staggered, or unwilling to close further.

• **Shadow Affinity**: Dim, enclosed, or poorly lit terrain often grants them Advantage.

• **Pack Obedience**: Servitors coordinate well around a single command or target.

• **Master-Bound**: If their controller is disrupted, slain, or driven off, their discipline may falter badly.

Hell-Hound

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Fiery Bite — 1d10 fire

Hell-Hounds are massive infernal dogs with coal-dark hides, ember-cracked muzzles, burning eyes, and breath that leaves smoke hanging in the air like a threat being underlined. Their paws char wood, blacken cloth, and fill stone corridors with the smell of

scorched fur and furnace ash. They move with the clean certainty of trained killers who know they are faster than fear and enjoy proving it.

In Limbo they emerge through infernal tears, devil-led incursions, blood-fed breaches, and routes where fire has learned to hunt. They work well in packs, track by scent, and excel at running prey into corners where heat and panic can finish what teeth began. Some are leashed, some are summoned, and some are loose enough that the distinction stops mattering after the first attack.

A Hell-Hound makes an ordinary corridor feel suddenly much more flammable than the construction records suggested.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Flame Breath**: Once per fight, a Hell-Hound may exhale a short cone of fire for 1d10 harm against those caught within it.

• **Fire Aura**: Those fighting it at Reach risk minor burning harm or gear damage through proximity alone.

• **Pack Hunter**: Multiple Hell-Hounds coordinate brutally well.

• **Infernal Scent**: They are very difficult to evade by ordinary concealment once they have your smell.

Voidling

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Null Touch — 1d8 psychic or void harm

Voidlings are small walking absences: knots of blackness, warped silhouette, and sucking unreality that seem less like creatures than like mistakes in the world's confidence. Their edges wobble as if the eye cannot quite keep them fixed, and light around them feels dimmer, thinner, less willing to commit. They are one of those things that become more upsetting the longer you look, which is a poor design choice in any enemy.

In Limbo they appear where Astral instability, dimensional thinning, magical collapse, or reality damage has gone uncorrected. They consume light, muffled sound, and interfere with magical coherence simply by being nearby. Though not always intelligent in familiar ways, they are curious and destructive in equal measure, often drawn to devices, wards, ritual sites, and anyone actively trying to concentrate.

A Voidling rarely looks impressive. Then everyone's spell fails and the room stops making proper sound.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Magic Disruption**: Spellcasting and magical concentration near a Voidling often suffer Disadvantage.

• **Reality Tear**: Once per scene, a Voidling may create a short-lived area of unnatural silence, darkness, or sensory dampening.

• **Unsettling Form**: Targets observing it too closely may need to test composure or suffer distraction.

• **Void-Touched**: Conventional environmental effects often trouble it less than living things.

Pale Cantor

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0 (special)
Attack: Echo Lash — 1d8 psychic

Pale Cantors are white, trembling dream-spirits whose forms seem made of lace-thin skin, weak moonlight, and audible grief. Their mouths open too wide when they sing, though "sing" may be a charitable word for

the eerie layered hum they produce. Their bodies drift and quiver as though sustained by emotional resonance more than muscle, and wherever they gather, courage begins to feel like a choice that requires paperwork.

They step into Limbo through emotionally saturated dream routes, mass fear events, grief-soaked passages, and places where panic lingered after the people left. Cantors are not always openly hostile at first. Some simply drift, listening, feeding, and waiting for tension to ripen into something more delicious. But once threatened—or once enough fear is present—they become active predators of morale.

A room full of Pale Cantors can defeat a group before anyone has actually bled.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Wailing Chorus**: Once per fight, a Pale Cantor may unleash a wave of psychic song; those nearby must test Presence or lose their next action to shock, sorrow, or psychic disorientation.

• **Incorporeal Drift**: Ordinary physical attacks are less effective unless spiritually or magically meaningful.

• **Fear Aura**: The emotionally uncertain, grieving, or already panicked suffer more strongly in their presence.

• **Choir Instinct**: Cantors are more dangerous in groups, where their voices layer into something much worse.

Night Terror

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Nightmare Claws — 1d10 psychic

Night Terrors are the full-body manifestation of panic given talons and permission. Tall, twisted, and made of strained darkness wrapped around a vaguely humanoid shape, they move with the jerking certainty of things born from sleep paralysis, fever fear, and remembered helplessness. Their eyes burn white or pale gold, their limbs lengthen when they lunge, and the air around them often thickens with the sensation that running will somehow make them faster.

In Limbo they emerge from badly fed Dream Passages, sustained fear-sites, sleeping districts under occult pressure, and rooms that have spent too long learning the shape of human terror. They are stronger and more self-directed than Boogeymen, less playful than nightmare fauna, and far more interested in crushing will before body. If one is active in a district, the pattern of bad dreams usually starts before the first confirmed attack.

A Night Terror is not subtle. It is what happens after subtle has finished its work.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fear Aura**: Most living creatures must test Presence to function properly when fully engaged by a Night Terror.

• **Mind-Clutch**: On a strong successful attack, it may briefly paralyze, freeze, or overwhelm a target with pure terror.

• **Dream-Fed**: Environments thick with fear, nightmare residue, or sleeping vulnerability often empower it.

• **Predator of the Weak-Willed**: It prefers isolated, exhausted, or emotionally compromised prey.

Rakshasa

Threat: 5
Wounds: 6
Armor: 2
Attack: Claw — 1d10+1; Illusion Bolt — 1d8 psychic

Rakshasas are tiger-headed fiends wrapped in courtly fabric, jeweled confidence, and lies so polished they almost count as architecture. Their fur is immaculate even in ruin, their claws are clean, their eyes are old and amused, and their movements suggest they have never entered a room without first deciding what everyone in it is worth. Their voices are refined, purring, and deeply difficult to trust—precisely because they are often calm enough to make trust feel sophisticated.

In Limbo, Rakshasas seek hidden knowledge, artifacts, vulnerable minds, old libraries, compromised elites, and situations where fear can be redirected into obedience. They do not hurry to violence if manipulation will do. They use glamour, illusion, flattery, humiliation, and the strategic arrangement of false realities to break targets apart before any claw is needed. When they do fight directly, they do so with the irritation of a noble forced to carry a heavy object themselves.

A Rakshasa is one of the clearest signs that the problem has moved beyond "monster" and into "campaign."

Traits & Abilities:
• **Illusory Double:** A Rakshasa may create false positions, duplicate images, or decoy forms that impose Disadvantage on direct attack until pierced.

• **Bewilder:** It may cloud judgment, scramble certainty, or distort perception through hostile glamour.

• **Immune to Mundane Weapons:** Ordinary unprepared attacks often fail to affect it meaningfully unless enhanced by magic, symbolic force, or special banes.

• **Master Manipulator:** Social scenes, bargains, false memories, and controlled panic are as much its weapons as its claws.

ABERRATIONS & ELDRITCH CREATURES

Things not built for sane eyes or simple explanation. Twisted flesh, impossible geometry, wrong instincts, and minds that move sideways through reason make these beings some of the strangest horrors a Protagonist may face.

Brain Flayer

Threat: 5
Wounds: 6
Armor: 1
Attack: Tentacle Grasp — 1d8 psychic; Mind Blast — special

Brain Flayers are tall, robed horrors with slick violet, grey, or corpse-pale flesh, elongated skulls, and faces draped in writhing feeding tentacles where a civilized mouth ought to have had the courtesy to remain. Their eyes glow like wet embers or dim lantern coals, and their movements are unnervingly smooth, as though the body is merely a polite transport for the will inside. Even before one speaks, a Brain Flayer gives the impression that your thoughts are already being handled without permission.

In Limbo, Brain Flayers appear through deep Astral tears, thought-rich breaches, old experiment vaults, and hidden routes that brush against realms of psychic predation. They are hunters of intellect, planners of domination, and patient investigators of thresholds

that might lead to richer feeding grounds. They rarely rush. A Brain Flayer prefers to learn the room first, identify the sharpest mind present, and turn that mind into the first target, tool, or warning.

They are among the most disturbing beings a Creep may face not because of gore, but because they treat identity as edible.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Mind Blast**: Once per fight, a Brain Flayer may unleash a cone or burst of psychic force; those caught must test Presence or Intellect or suffer stun, disorientation, or the loss of their next action.

• **Psychic Resistance**: Ordinary fear tricks, illusion, and weak mental pressure rarely affect it cleanly.

• **Tentacle Seizure**: A strong successful close attack may pin, weaken, or prepare a victim for further psychic assault.

• **Predator of Thought**: It gains Advantage when targeting scholars, casters, planners, or anyone clearly carrying the room's strategic burden.

Beholder

Threat: 6
Wounds: 8
Armor: 2
Attack: Bite — 1d10; Eye Rays — special

A Beholder is an enormous floating orb of flesh, teeth, and impossible anatomy crowned with writhing eyestalks and a single central eye that looks at the world as though everything in it has already failed inspection. Its hide is leathery and often mottled in diseased purples, fleshy greys, fungus-yellow, or bruise-dark tones, and its mouth opens wide enough to turn abstract dread into practical concern. Every eyestalk moves independently, giving the impression of a creature that does not merely watch the room, but audits it.

In Limbo, Beholders emerge through warped Astral passages, impossible observatory breaches, deep aberrant zones, and realms where geometry and paranoia have been allowed to evolve unchecked. They hate disorder, but their idea of order is both tyrannical and bizarre. A Beholder may attempt to dominate a tunnel network, convert a chamber complex into a killing puzzle, or simply annihilate anything that offends its private logic. They are territorial, brilliant, and frequently insane in ways too coherent to dismiss.

A Beholder encounter should feel less like "a monster appears" and more like "the architecture has acquired opinions and teeth."

Traits & Abilities:
• **All-Around Vision**: It is extremely difficult to flank, ambush, or sneak up on a Beholder once it is alert.

• **Eye Rays**: Each round, or as the Creepmaster deems appropriate, the Beholder may fire one ray from a stalk—disintegration, fear, sleep, slowing force, binding energy, or another aberrant effect suited to the scene.

• **Central Suppression Eye**: The main eye may suppress active magic, illusions, or supernatural effects in the area it fixes upon.

• **Paranoid Tyrant**: A Beholder is most dangerous in territory it has prepared or come to consider its own.

Eyestalk Swarm

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Eye Dart — 1d6 or special beam effect

Eyestalk Swarms are exactly the kind of thing one hopes never to discover are possible. These drifting masses of severed, still-living eyestalks bob and spin through the air like a bouquet assembled by a hallucination. Each stalk ends in a blinking eye, each eye twitches with independent attention, and the whole swarm chatters faintly in telepathic static that feels like overhearing a nightmare argue with itself. Their motion is erratic, but not random. They circle like scavengers around anything weak, magical, or worth studying.

They are most often found near slain Beholders, aberrant hives, contaminated laboratories, or places where a sufficiently hateful eye-based lifeform died without having the decency to stop being a problem. In Limbo, they drift through ruined towers, high caverns, old observatories, and breach-zones where reality has grown too tolerant of wrong anatomy.

They are not individually powerful. That is not their chosen insult.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Swarmform:** Blows that would cripple a single creature are less effective against the whole mass unless broad, fiery, or especially forceful.

• **Disorient Beam:** A successful attack may blur vision, scramble focus, or impose Disadvantage on the victim's next action.

• **Aerial Clutter:** Their movement complicates lines of sight, ranged attacks, and any plan requiring calm visual control.

• **Telepathic Static:** Prolonged proximity may cause distraction, nausea, or mental irritation even before a real attack lands.

Brain Tick

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Psychic Bite — 1d4 psychic

Brain Ticks are tiny, translucent, spider-like parasites with swollen cranial sacs, too many grasping little legs, and pulsing cores visible through their bodies like wet lanterns under skin. They are horrifying partly because of what they do and partly because their size invites the deeply incorrect thought that they might not matter very much. They matter exactly enough to ruin an entire scene.

They creep in through cracks in reality, dream-seams, mold-rich walls, eldritch nests, and old aberrant tunnels where larger things have left eggs, residue, or spiritual debris behind. Brain Ticks seek heads, necks, exposed skin, sleeping bodies, and distracted victims. Once attached, they whisper impulses, confusion, static urges, or emotional distortions into the host in ways that are often more dangerous than the tiny wound itself.

A Brain Tick is not a battle. It is a small betrayal with legs.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Latch-On:** On a successful close attack, a Brain Tick may attach itself to the target. Removing it quickly usually requires action and composure.

• **Psychic Interference:** An attached Tick imposes Disadvantage on concentration, memory, judgment, or similar functions.

• **Tiny Target:** They are hard to strike cleanly unless clearly seen and properly reached.

• **Host Seeker:** They prefer distracted, sleeping, restrained, or already compromised targets.

Aether Leech

Threat: 2
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Drain Touch — 1d6 plus magical drain

Aether Leeches are translucent, slug-like or lamprey-like creatures with glassy bodies full of drifting inner light. Their forms pulse faintly with stolen magic, and their mouths unfold into soft ugly rings of feeding structures not meant for anything polite. They leave faint silver slime where they crawl, and their presence often makes nearby charms flicker, lanterns gutter, and casters swear under their breath for reasons they at first misattribute.

In Limbo, Aether Leeches gather around ritual sites, broken wards, occult workshops, damaged portals, abandoned sanctums, and anywhere magical energy has been leaking long enough to become edible. They are not brave in direct combat, but they are excellent opportunists. If a spellcaster is weak, distracted, or overextended, a Leech may become the nastiest minor problem in the room.

They do not hate magic. They simply treat it as soup.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Magic Absorption**: Casters near an Aether Leech often suffer Disadvantage on spell use or magical concentration.

• **Mana Drain**: A successful feeding strike may disrupt the victim's next spell, magical effect, or prepared working.

• **Leech Cowardice**: They flee direct harm quickly unless feeding successfully.

• **Arcane Scent**: They are drawn strongly to prepared ritualists, charged objects, and active magical scenes.

Dim-Horror

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0 (special)
Attack: Dim Claw — 1d8+1

Dim-Horrors are half-formed things from the darkness between stable places. They look like silhouettes trying to become bodies and not quite deciding how many limbs they require. Their edges fade and reform, their movements skip slightly as if reality cannot keep a constant grip on them, and their voices—if they make any—sound like distant echoes pushed through wet cloth. A Dim-Horror never seems fully present, which is exactly why fighting one is such a trial.

They emerge from thin places, broken shadows, collapsing dream-zones, dimensional gutters, and old seam-rents where something incompletely real has learned to hunt. In Limbo they favor lonely corridors, collapsed service ways, lamp-failed stairwells, and old dark where no one has been speaking loudly enough to remind the room how many dimensions it ought to have. They prefer lone prey and places where certainty is already in short supply.

A Dim-Horror is a strong argument for bringing two lanterns and a friend.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Shadow-Body**: Many ordinary physical attacks deal reduced harm unless especially well-timed, forceful, or symbolically grounded.

• **Blink Step**: It may shift short distances abruptly, making pursuit and pinning very difficult.

• **Unsteady Presence**: Anyone fighting it may suffer brief uncertainty, misjudgment of distance, or timing interference.

• **Lone Hunter**: It gains Advantage when targeting isolated creatures away from support.

Portal Maw

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Rift Bite — 1d10

A Portal Maw resembles a mobile wound in space edged in teeth. Its body is less flesh than rupture: a gnashing dimensional crack lined with jaws, raw light, glistening membrane, and impossible geometry that refuses to settle into anything the eye can comfortably call a creature. Bits of swallowed matter sometimes orbit it briefly before vanishing or being spat back out as glowing debris, broken objects, or deeply symbolic nonsense. Looking at it too long makes ordinary doorways seem less trustworthy than they were.

In Limbo, Portal Maws form where breaches are repeatedly mistreated, Astral seams are cut too often, or magical apparatus has taught a passage to hunger. They drift through vaults, collapsed chambers, maintenance corridors, and ritual ruins, devouring matter, draining magic, and testing any moving thing to see whether it qualifies as structure. They are less intelligent than some aberrations, but no less catastrophic when ignored.

A Portal Maw is what happens when a threshold stops pretending it was ever there for travel.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Consume Essence**: A successful bite may drain magical force, weakening the victim's next spell, dream-working, or occult action.

• **Incorporeal Distortion**: Mundane strikes often interact with it badly or incompletely unless backed by force, magic, or strong symbolic grounding.

• **Spatial Hunger**: Cover, barriers, and edges near it may become unreliable in unsettling ways.

• **Rift Spawn**: Its presence often worsens fragile portals or threatens to turn safe gaps into scene hazards.

Echo Serpent

Threat: 3
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Echo Bite — 1d8 psychic

Echo Serpents are long translucent snakes made of sound, memory, and pale reverberating light. Their bodies shimmer like vibrations made visible, and their scales—if they have scales at all—seem more like layered tones than matter. They move through air, along walls, and across resonant surfaces with eerie grace, leaving behind stolen voices, clipped phrases, or the ghost of a sound someone did not mean to lose. Their eyes are often dark pits ringed with static shimmer.

They gather in reverberant caverns, tunnels, music halls, bell chambers, pipe-runs, and old places where voices mattered too much. In Limbo they also appear near dream-rich districts where memory and sound have begun sharing habits. They feed on noise and identity in small pieces, preferring victims who speak, shout, sing, call warnings, or try to name what they are seeing. This makes them especially hateful in emergencies.

An Echo Serpent can turn command, spellwork, and even comfort into resources it steals from the scene.

Traits & Abilities:

• **Voice Theft**: A successful strike may steal the victim's speech for a time, preventing clear commands, chanting, or easy spellcasting.

• **Soundform**: They interact strangely with silence, echo, and loud vibration; purely visual concealment rarely fools them.

• **Resonance Hunter**: They gain Advantage in echoing tunnels, halls, chambers, and pipe systems.

• **Memory Taste**: Names, songs, repeated phrases, and emotionally charged voices draw them strongly.

Unblinking Mass

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 1
Attack: Pseudopod — 1d8+1

The Unblinking Mass is a shuddering mound of flesh or flesh-like substance covered in countless open eyes of varying size, age, and degree of spiritual offensiveness. The eyes stare in every direction at once, weep clear fluid or black tears depending on mood, and never close—not from light, not from blood, not from mercy, because mercy is not part of the anatomy. The creature itself creeps rather than walks, pushing its bulk forward in pulsing waves while its gaze does most of the scene damage before the body ever arrives.

It appears in aberrant nests, punishment chambers, corrupted sanctums, old observation vaults, and nightmare sites where being watched became more important than being safe. In Limbo it can drift from ruined passages no one enters twice, and once active, it tends to make a whole area feel morally overexposed. The eyes do not merely see. They impose attention.

A great many brave people become much less brave after too many of those eyes settle on them at once.

Traits & Abilities:

• **Gaze of Madness**: Those under its concentrated attention must test composure or suffer Disadvantage, nausea, panic, or mental disarray.

• **All-Around Vision**: Surprise and flanking are extremely difficult against it.

• **Creeping Persistence**: It is slow, but once moving toward a target it is stubbornly difficult to divert without force or strong symbolism.

• **Many-Eyed Horror**: Illusions, concealment, and ordinary stealth often perform badly against it.

LIMBO-NATIVES & STRANGELINGS

Creatures born of Limbo itself, or changed so thoroughly by its roads, dreams, fungi, and fractures that they no longer belong anywhere else.

Astral Spider

Threat: 4
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Fangs — 1d8+1

Astral Spiders are many-eyed hunters born in seam-fractures and star-thin places, their bodies seeming at once chitinous and crystalline, like glass taught to crawl. Their legs are long and precise, their abdomens shimmer with dim nebular color, and the silk they spin glows faintly as if woven from cut moonlight and bad geometry. In stillness they can resemble strange decorative debris. That impression does not survive movement.

They build webs in high ruins, broken vaults, upper caverns, old observatories, and the edges of Astral-linked breaches where space has become slightly too willing to hold shape. Their webs do more than bind. They may slice, distort, refract, or slightly misplace whatever they catch. A trapped victim may find not only that they cannot move, but that the room itself no longer agrees on exactly where they are.

An Astral Spider is what happens when architecture decides to start trapping people on purpose.

Traits & Abilities:

• **Astral Web:** The Spider may entangle a target in glowing webbing; victims must test Grace or be immobilized, and severe failures may cause brief spatial disorientation.

• **Wall and Ceiling Hunter:** It ignores many ordinary movement restrictions in built or cavern terrain.

• **Star-Silk Ambush:** Its webs are difficult to spot before they matter unless the viewer is specifically alert.

• **Dimensional Slip:** In Astral-rich areas, the Spider may reposition in subtly impossible ways that make pursuit and line-of-attack unpleasantly uncertain.

Bump

Threat: 0
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Bounce Slam — 1d4

Bumps are small, round, shadow-furred creatures with wide eyes, soft bellies, stubby little limbs, and a deep commitment to making exactly the wrong noise at exactly the wrong time. They resemble a cross between a soot-ball, a startled hedgehog, and a child's bad excuse. Their fur ranges from charcoal to dusty brown, grey, or fungus-speckled black, and they have a habit of rolling bodily downhill whenever emotion exceeds balance—which is often.

They are native to Limbo and found almost anywhere there are corridors, stairs, pipes, sleeping quarters, forgotten cupboards, crawlspaces, storage lofts, or any other space where a sudden thud can cause immediate social consequences. Most Bumps are harmless, mischievous, or simply clumsy in ways that have become culturally accepted by districts resigned

to them. Some are even semi-domesticated. Unfortunately, "mostly harmless" does not prevent them from triggering panic, revealing stealth, or convincing children that the room definitely contains a monster when in fact it only contains a very nervous ball of fur hitting a bucket.

A Bump is not dangerous because it is strong. A Bump is dangerous because timing is cruel.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Night-Bump**: Once per scene, a Bump may create a sudden loud noise that startles those nearby; the Creepmaster may impose Disadvantage on the next action of anyone whose nerves were already frayed.

• **Round Body**: Bumps are difficult to knock prone in any meaningful way because that is more or less their default relationship with gravity.

• **Uncontrolled Roll**: On slopes, stairs, ramps, and unstable footing, a Bump may move surprisingly fast and unpredictably.

• **Harmless Until It Isn't**: They are not fighters by nature, but they excel at ruining timing, stealth, and dignity.

Cavern Crawler

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Mandible Bite — 1d8

Cavern Crawlers are long-bodied, many-legged hybrids of centipede, bat, and some deeply impolite local idea of natural design. Their segmented bodies cling to walls and ceilings with unsettling ease, their antennae glow faintly in pale blue, sickly green, or yellow fungus-light, and their wings—small, leathery, and only occasionally used for actual flight—buzz when agitated in ways that make everyone nearby reconsider the ceiling. Their eyes are black, beadlike, and entirely too aware for a creature that still clicks like an insect.

They thrive in tight spaces: service shafts, high caverns, fungus groves, drainage channels, pipe tunnels, old post roofs, and any other place where "above you" is a serious strategic concern. Most feed on mushrooms, moss, rot, and whatever smaller living things fail to keep moving. Some district folk view them as pests. Others view them as useful ecological cleaners. Both groups become very quiet when one drops from the ceiling onto a visitor's back.

They are skittish until cornered, and far more offensive than their dietary habits suggest.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Wallclimber**: Cavern Crawlers ignore many normal movement barriers in vertical or overhead terrain.

• **Antenna Flash**: Once per fight, a Crawler may flare its antennae and force a nearby target to test composure or suffer brief blindness, disorientation, or loss of clear vision.

• **Ceiling Ambush**: They gain Advantage when attacking from overhead concealment.

• **Skitter Panic**: If badly hurt, a Crawler may retreat through routes too narrow or awkward for larger creatures to follow quickly.

Shroom-Hopper

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Head-Bonk — 1d4

Shroom-Hoppers are plump, bouncy mushroom-creatures with rubbery little bodies, glowing caps, soft

feet, and the expression of things that have never entirely understood why the world is so loud. Their cap colors vary by district—cream, gold, red-speckled, blue-grey, violet, lantern-orange—and many emit a faint glow when content, alarmed, or praised. Their faces, to the extent they have them, are often endearingly foolish until the spores come out.

They are common in fungal groves, dim terraces, pantry gardens, moss tunnels, and damp district corners where people have learned to step carefully if they do not want to be followed by hopeful bouncing. Most Shroom-Hoppers are harmless and widely kept as semi-pets, mascots, or unofficial post companions. They are soft, edible-looking, and surprisingly resilient to rough handling, which does not mean anyone should test the point too often.

When frightened, they release odd-smelling spores that can make a bad scene weirder very quickly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Sleep Spore:** Once per scene, a frightened or defensive Shroom-Hopper may release a small cloud of spores; nearby targets must test Endurance or suffer drowsiness, slowed reaction, or light-headedness.

• **Sporebody:** Many poisons, molds, and common fungal hazards affect them very little.

• **Bounce Movement:** They move in quick hopping bursts and can be surprisingly hard to grab cleanly.

• **Mostly Harmless:** They rarely initiate aggression, but panicked Hoppers can turn a stealth or rescue scene into a dreamy mess.

Gloom Laika

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Bite — 1d8

Gloom Laikas are doglike native hounds of Limbo with silky shadow-fur, lantern-yellow eyes, long ears, and a shape halfway between noble patrol companion and old ghost story. Their coats drink in dim light, their paws move with eerie quiet, and their gaze is unsettlingly thoughtful for animals that still absolutely enjoy chasing thrown objects if the shift has not been too bad. When still, they almost vanish against dark stone. When moving, they look like loyalty with teeth.

Some Gloom Laikas run wild in the outer districts, fungal forests, and abandoned routes. Others are bonded to Patrols, Wardens, or certain old families who claim the breed has always belonged to Limbo and merely permits people to assist occasionally. They are fiercely protective of chosen companions and territory, and unlike many ordinary animals, they seem deeply attuned to hidden presences, approaching wrongness, and thresholds that are about to behave badly.

A Gloom Laika is one of the best reasons to trust your companion's reaction before your own nerves.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Nightvision:** Gloom Laikas see and track well in dim, smoky, or lantern-poor conditions.

• **Warning Howl:** A Gloom Laika may alert nearby allies to hidden danger, granting Advantage on surprise resistance or immediate defensive reactions.

• **Pack Protector:** When defending a chosen ally, it becomes much bolder and harder to drive off.

• **Threshold-Sensitive:** They often react before visible evidence appears when a portal, ghost, or shadow threat is approaching.

Lantern Wisp

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Light Zap — 1d6

Lantern Wisps are floating spheres of amber or pale gold light with tiny semi-visible core bodies suspended inside, like glowing jellyfish taught to impersonate civic utility. They drift at eye level or just above it, bobbing gently when calm and flashing brighter when excited, frightened, or mischievously inspired. Their glow ranges from warm and inviting to deeply suspicious depending on temperament and the exact sort of path they are currently encouraging someone to follow.

They are native to Limbo and common near old lantern routes, memory-rich roads, shrines, abandoned stairwells, and dim passages where direction becomes more emotional than practical. Some Wisps guide lost Creeps, children, and wanderers toward safety. Others guide them somewhere else entirely, not always out of malice—sometimes simply because the Wisp finds the alternative route prettier, stranger, or more educational. That said, there are certainly mean ones.

A Lantern Wisp is either a blessing, a fool, or a liar. Often all three.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Glow Aura**: A Wisp casts local light and may weaken lesser darkness effects simply by being present.

• **Guide or Mislead**: A Wisp may grant Advantage or Disadvantage to attempts at navigation depending on whether it is helpful, amused, or offended.

• **Floating Body**: Ordinary terrain, ledges, and minor obstacles mean little to it.

• **Capricious Intent**: Wisps are intelligent enough to choose, but not always wise enough to choose well.

Pocket-Beast

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Nibble — 1d4

Pocket-Beasts are smooth-skinned, pouch-like creatures with stretchy hides, round little legs, soft eyes, and mouths much larger on the inside than any anatomy text would authorize. They resemble ambulatory satchels made by a cheerful occult tailor with no ethics and good taste in leather. Their skins come in shades of tan, grey, brown, blue-black, moss green, and mushroom cream, and they often make little cooing, grumbling, or offended pouch noises while sorting their own internal collections.

In Limbo they are valued, tolerated, hunted, stolen, bred, and occasionally overfed depending on district culture and local law. Pocket-Beasts swallow objects whole and store them safely within extradimensional pouches of limited but impressive capacity. They are generally docile unless disturbed while feeding, mishandled, or accused of theft in tones they consider slanderous. More than one Patrol quartermaster has formed a deeply unhealthy emotional dependence on one.

They are not combat creatures by trade, but desperate storage with legs can still become unpleasantly creative.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Living Storage**: A Pocket-Beast can safely store a surprising amount of small gear, tools, food, or miscellany within its internal pouch.

• **Item Spit**: Once per fight, it may spit up a random stored object with enough force to count as a thrown impact.

• **Docile Collector**: It is generally calm unless threatened, cornered, or denied things it has already swallowed.

• **Suspicious Appetite**: Shiny, flavorful, unusual, or important objects are all at risk if left unsecured nearby.

Dream-Heron

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Beak — 1d8

Dream-Herons are tall, graceful birds with long legs, narrow skulls, and feathers patterned in dim stars, cloud-silver, pale lavender, or deep river blue depending on line and habitat. Their movements are slow and precise, as though they are always deciding whether a step should happen in this reality or slightly beside it. Their eyes are large and reflective, and when they cry it sounds less like a bird call than a dream being folded in half.

They drift through unstable dream routes, reflective waterways, moonlit canals, and old threshold pools where sleep and place have become difficult to separate. Most Dream-Herons are aloof and non-aggressive, feeding on dream residue, symbolic detritus, and small creatures saturated with strange energy. However, if threatened—or if a site they have claimed is disturbed—they become unexpectedly swift and severe.

A Dream-Heron is the kind of creature that makes even experienced Creeps lower their voices without fully knowing why.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dream-Touched**: Dream-Herons are immune or highly resistant to sleep effects and similar dream-sedation.

• **Dream Cry**: Once per scene, their call may impose distraction, flickering visions, or brief symbolic disorientation on nearby listeners.

• **Aloof Grace**: They are difficult to corner or read emotionally.

• **Threshold Feeder**: They are drawn to weak dream-zones, reflective water, and emotionally charged quiet spaces.

Fuzzling

Threat: 0
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Scratch — 1d4

Fuzzlings are tiny, soft, absurdly adorable creatures with oversized eyes, fluff-ball bodies, little paws, and all the evolutionary confidence of something that survived entirely by becoming hard to scold. Their fur comes in every plausible and several implausible colors—cream, soot, rust, pale blue, moss green, smoky lavender—and many of them squeak or trill constantly as if narrating their own unnecessary activities. They are common enough in many districts that locals forget how strange they would seem to outsiders until one starts stealing candle wax.

Most Fuzzlings are harmless scavengers, comfort-beasts, nuisance companions, or semidomesticated fluff pests. They cluster in warm corners, pantry shelves, blanket piles, storage nooks, and old furniture, often appearing exactly where someone wanted a dramatic reveal and instead got ten ounces of confusion with whiskers. When frightened, however, they puff up and emit a shriek far too large

for their bodies, which can ruin stealth, sleep, morale, or occasionally all three.

They are not dangerous. They are just terribly available to bad timing.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fear Squeak:** Once per scene, a frightened Fuzzling may emit a piercing shriek; nearby creatures may suffer distraction, startle, or spoiled stealth.

• **Cute Distraction:** Many living creatures hesitate, fumble, or soften around them unless already fully committed to violence.

• **Tiny Scuttler:** Fuzzlings are difficult to grab in clutter.

• **Semidomesticated Menace:** They are often tolerated near homes, posts, and shops, which means they are always underfoot when drama arrives.

Spindle-Scuttler

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Pin-Leg Jab — 1d8

Spindle-Scuttlers are thin, many-legged things resembling living sewing needles assembled into spider form by a being with excellent precision and questionable mercy. Their bodies are sleek and glossy, often metallic black, silvery grey, or bone-pale, and their limbs end in needle points fine enough to slide through cloth, skin, and soft leather with insulting accuracy. They move with mechanical elegance and often make faint ticking noises like a clock trying to hide in the walls.

Native to Limbo, they nest in drapery stores, cloth vaults, abandoned tailor shops, old sleeping quarters, under-bridge web fields, and dim service passages where their glowing silk can anchor neatly. They prey on insects, small creatures, loose fabric, and whatever larger being trips into their snare in a hurry. Despite their size, they display an unsettling degree of patient territorial thought.

A Spindle-Scuttler does not hate you. It simply objects to your relationship with thread and blood.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Thread Snare:** A Scuttler may pin a target with silk line; victims must test Grace to avoid entanglement or slowed movement.

• **Webspinner:** It creates strong, subtle web structures that are difficult to notice before contact.

• **Needle Precision:** Its strikes excel against exposed skin, cloth, and lightly armored prey.

• **Territorial Mind:** Once it has claimed a route or corner, it is reluctant to abandon it without repeated force.

Echo-Mite

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Sound Bite — 1d4

Echo-Mites are tiny insectoid beings with glossy bodies, thin shell plates, trembling feelers, and a disturbing sensitivity to sound. They cluster in swarms along pipes, bell housings, wall cracks, instrument cases, stair rails, and any surface that carries useful vibration. Their bodies are usually dull grey, brown, or black, but when startled they shimmer with strange reflective bands as though the noise around them has become visible for a moment.

They are common in noisy districts, industrial corridors, old music halls, resonant tunnels, and any

place where repeated sound becomes food. Echo-Mites are generally harmless until alarmed, at which point they ricochet sound in disorienting bursts, creating false echoes, delayed footfalls, doubled whispers, or maddening acoustic confusion. A few are tolerable. A swarm in the wrong corridor during a pursuit is grounds for profanity.

They are one of Limbo's lesser pests, but lesser does not mean polite.

Traits & Abilities:

• **Echo Burst:** Once per scene, a frightened swarm may produce disorienting reverberation; nearby creatures must test composure or suffer Disadvantage on their next action involving hearing, timing, or direction.

• **Sound Sense:** Echo-Mites perceive vibration and are difficult to fool through visual concealment alone.

• **Swarm Skitter:** They scatter quickly through cracks, rails, and wall seams when threatened.

• **Noise Feeder:** Loud scenes, bells, shouting, combat, and machinery attract them strongly.

ELEMENTAL CREATURES & BEINGS

Living fire, walking stone, hungry wind, bitter frost, and stranger embodiments of the raw forces that shape worlds and ruin them.

Flame Sprite

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Fire Touch — 1d6 fire

Flame Sprites are tiny elemental beings born from candlefire, stove embers, ritual sparks, forge tongues, and the sort of household blaze that briefly becomes more interested in the room than the room deserves. They resemble little bodies of leaping fire with bright eyes hidden somewhere in the heart of the flame, and they move with the crackling, skittering enthusiasm of creatures who consider curtains a philosophical opportunity. Their light is warm, lively, and frequently a warning.

In Limbo, Flame Sprites drift through kitchen routes, forge districts, lamp towers, abandoned furnace rooms, and any breach where elemental fire brushed too close to dream-fed structure. Some are playful and merely troublesome, darting through workshops and igniting small inconveniences. Others are mean little arson spirits who behave as though panic is a kind of music. Their intelligence varies from animal impulse to sharp malicious curiosity.

A Flame Sprite is not a conflagration by itself. It is the reason one begins.

Traits & Abilities:

• **Firebody:** Flame Sprites ignore ordinary fire and heat, but are vulnerable to cold, smothering effects, and water-heavy suppression.

• **Spark Burst:** Once per scene, a Flame Sprite may flare outward in a short burst, inflicting minor fire harm nearby or igniting loose flammables.

• **Tiny Flicker Motion:** They are hard to pin or strike cleanly while active in open air.

• **Chaos Drawn:** They are attracted to panic, dry clutter, old paper, alchemical mess, and anyone saying "it's under control."

Greater Fire Elemental

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6

Armor: 1
Attack: Flame Fists — 1d10 fire

A Greater Fire Elemental is a walking inferno given temporary agreement with shape. It may resemble a humanoid mass of flame, a coiling furnace-giant, or a broad-shouldered blaze with molten eyes depending on where it formed and what kind of fire birthed it. Its outline wavers constantly, its body sheds embers with every motion, and every step leaves scorch marks, warped metal, cracked stone, or a much more urgent tone in the people nearby.

Such beings arrive in Limbo through volcanic dream breaches, summoning disasters, great forge-failures, uncontrolled rituals, or places where elemental fire found an open route and saw no reason to apologize. A Greater Fire Elemental does not need to hate anyone to be catastrophic. It spreads heat, consumes shelter, punishes crowding, and turns every civilized interior into a negotiation with smoke. Some are furious. Some are merely hungry. Neither state is especially compatible with district safety.

This is not the sort of fire one beats with blankets and optimism.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Burning Aura**: Anyone fighting at Reach risks ongoing fire harm or ignition of clothing, gear, or nearby materials.

• **Inferno Wave**: Once per fight, the Elemental may project a cone or surge of flame for 2d8 fire harm across a short area.

• **Firebody**: It ignores ordinary heat and many lesser physical inconveniences but suffers against cold, quenching force, or properly prepared elemental countermeasures.

• **Scene Ignition**: Its mere presence may advance fire, panic, collapse, or evacuation Clocks in combustible spaces.

Stone Warden

Threat: 4
Wounds: 7
Armor: 3
Attack: Slam — 1d10+1

Stone Wardens are looming elemental guardians of living rock with broad shoulders, slow-burning mineral cores, and faces that look carved rather than grown. Their bodies may resemble granite, basalt, marble, slate, or ancient cave-stone shot through with glowing seams of amber, magma-red, or cold blue depending on origin. They move heavily, with the authority of things that assume the ground is on their side because, quite often, it is.

They enter Limbo through mineral-linked fissures, old sanctified caverns, mountain-root passages, and places where stone memory has become active enough to produce a keeper. Some Wardens are truly protective, maintaining old routes or guarding sacred formations. Others are hostile to trespass, excavation, noise, magic, or any creature foolish enough to strike the rock before introducing itself. They are not fast, but they are patient, and patience in a creature this durable is a strategic insult.

A Stone Warden is often less a monster than a geological objection.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Stonehide**: Their Armor is extremely effective against lesser weapons, glancing blows, and weak impacts.

• **Quake Stomp**: A heavy strike against the ground may force nearby targets to test Grace or be staggered, knocked prone, or denied footing.

• **Immovable Weight**: They are very difficult to shove, trip, pin, or force out of a protected position.

• **Guardian Temperament**: They grow more dangerous when defending a site, threshold, or ancient structure they consider under their care.

Dustling

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Grit Blast — 1d6

Dustlings are small skittering elementals made of drifting grit, powdered stone, dry silt, and restless little vortexes of spite. Their forms are never entirely fixed: one might appear as a child-sized spiral with pebble eyes, another as a crouching figure of sand and shards, another as a crawling drift cloud held together by mood alone. They hiss when agitated, rattle over stone, and leave fine dust where they pass, usually exactly where someone was hoping not to slip.

In Limbo they gather in dry tunnels, abandoned cellars, crumbling records rooms, collapsed districts, ash-choked vents, and any place where neglect has had time to become particulate. Dustlings are not grand beings. They are bothersome, reactive, and often territorial in groups. They enjoy startling intruders, ruining visibility, and making every old room slightly harder to trust than it already was.

A Dustling is one of nature's strongest arguments for not kicking piles of suspicious debris.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dustform**: Slashing and piercing attacks often disperse them less effectively than crushing force, water, or magical control.

• **Sand Spray**: Once per scene, a Dustling may blast grit into nearby eyes and mouths, forcing a test against blindness, coughing, or immediate distraction.

• **Skitter Drift**: They move quickly through cracks, debris, and broken flooring.

• **Swarm Temper**: A handful of Dustlings is a nuisance; a room full of them is a visibility problem with opinions.

Current-Spirit

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Water Lash — 1d8

Current-Spirits are flowing elemental forms of translucent water shaped loosely like humanoids, river-beasts, or moving coils of stream force depending on temperament and source. Their bodies ripple around stones, absorb reflected light strangely, and often contain drifting leaves, bubbles, silver fish-shadows, or old submerged debris suspended within them like memories they never bothered to forget. Their voices, if they use them, tend to sound like streamwater over worn rock: calm right until the flood.

In Limbo they slip through underground lakes, canal-linked breaches, drowned shrine pools, and old cistern routes where elemental water has found room to think. Some are gentle, curious things content to drift and observe. Others are territorial, especially if pollution, blood, ritual corruption, or careless engineering has insulted the waters they inhabit. Their moods can shift quickly, and once angered they

become extraordinarily good at making breathing seem overvalued.

One of the dangers of a Current-Spirit is that it can be beautiful right up until the drowning starts.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fluid Form:** They are difficult to grapple, pin, or bind through ordinary physical means.

• **Drown Grip:** A strong successful attack may fill a target's lungs, choke breath, or deny the next action through coughing and water shock.

• **Water Mastery:** In wet, flooded, or submerged terrain they gain strong positional advantage.

• **Temper of the Channel:** They react strongly to desecration, poisoning, damming, and violence in sacred or settled waters.

Frost Wisp

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Frost Touch — 1d8 cold

Frost Wisps are drifting elemental entities of ice vapor, pale blue light, and sharp little patterns of freezing air. They appear as hovering knots of cold mist with dim inner cores, tiny crystalline limbs, or half-seen child-sized figures sculpted out of breath and winter. Their presence mutes sound, rims surfaces in white, and makes lanterns feel suddenly tired. They are beautiful in a way that encourages exactly the wrong kind of underestimation.

In Limbo they gather in cold-storage breaches, snow-linked portals, abandoned ice cellars, dead well-shafts, and upper caverns where cold air has pooled long enough to dream of itself. Some drift passively, cooling the spaces they haunt into eerie calm. Others are hostile little collectors of stillness, delighting in frozen locks, stiffened fingers, and the widening panic of anyone dressed for the entirely wrong season.

A Frost Wisp is rarely the whole winter. It is the part that arrives first and asks whether you packed properly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Coldbody:** Frost Wisps ignore cold and frost-based effects, but fire and intense heat strike them especially well.

• **Freezing Mist:** Once per scene, a Frost Wisp may spread numbing cold that slows movement, stiffens gear, or imposes Disadvantage on physical action.

• **Hovering Drift:** They ignore minor ground obstacles and use vertical space irritatingly well.

• **Lantern Weariness:** Nearby flames dim, sputter, or become less reliable in their presence.

Gale Hound

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Wind Bite — 1d8

Gale Hounds are four-legged shapes of moving air outlined only by drifting dust, bent mist, and the suggestion of jaws where pressure becomes violent enough to count. Their eyes appear as pale glimmers or narrow voids inside the wind-body, and when they run, the air around them pulls loose cloth, loose breath, and loose confidence along with it. Their howls often arrive seconds before the body does, rolled through corridors as a warning nobody requested.

In Limbo they form in wind-shafts, storm breaches, high terraces, broken roof districts, and old tower routes where air pressure has too much room and too

little supervision. Some hunt in packs, racing through wide caverns like invisible wolves made from draft and speed. Others serve larger storm entities, acting as scouts, escorts, or hunting beasts for weather with intent. They are most dangerous where footing is already poor.

A Gale Hound is the sort of enemy that makes "standing still" feel like a tactical luxury.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Airform:** Many physical attacks interact poorly with the Hound unless well-timed, heavy, or magically grounded.

• **Gust Blast:** A successful or scene-triggered burst may push targets, spoil aim, throw loose gear, or force loss of footing.

• **Extreme Speed:** Gale Hounds excel at charge, pursuit, and hit-and-run pressure in open lanes.

• **Storm Pack:** Multiple Gale Hounds create compounding wind hazards around the scene.

Thunderbrute

Threat: 5
Wounds: 8
Armor: 2
Attack: Lightning Strike — 1d10+1 lightning

Thunderbrutes are towering storm elementals shaped like giant warriors or broad-shouldered brutes of living cloud, rain-dark vapor, and branching veins of lightning under the skin. Their voices boom in broken syllables, their limbs crackle with charge, and every step brings a brief pressure change as though the weather itself is deciding whether the room should still count as indoors. Their edges never fully settle; thunder walks with them as a continuous threat.

In Limbo they enter through storm seams, mountain-tempest routes, broken observatory breaches, and rituals that called sky-power without enough walls or humility. Thunderbrutes are not subtle. They announce themselves through static, rattling metal, hair raising on skin, and the kind of silence crowds make when they realize lightning has learned posture. Some are mindless engines of impact. Others display a crude but real will, especially when directed by stronger elemental or divine patterns.

When a Thunderbrute arrives, the distinction between battlefield and weather event becomes administrative at best.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Stormbody:** They are immune or highly resistant to lightning and electrical effects.

• **Thunderclap:** Once per fight, a Thunderbrute may unleash a stunning concussive burst; nearby targets must test Endurance or Presence or be staggered, deafened, or lose their next action.

• **Charged Strikes:** Its melee attacks may arc to nearby metal, wet targets, or conductive surfaces if the Creepmaster judges the scene supports it.

• **Structural Violence:** Fights involving a Thunderbrute often advance damage, panic, or collapse Clocks without much encouragement.

Gloam-Born

Threat: 3
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0 (special)
Attack: Shadow Claws — 1d8+1

Gloam-Born are shadow elementals of near-liquid darkness with floating pale eyes, ragged edges, and a body-language that suggests smoke taught itself

malice. Unlike undead shadows, Gloam-Born feel elemental rather than haunted: less like a dead thing and more like a living patch of lightless weather that wants the room arranged differently. Their motions are soft, sliding, and deeply difficult to judge in dim conditions. The eye keeps trying to turn them into a silhouette and failing.

In Limbo they pool in abandoned wells, lamp-starved alleys, broken underways, cavern pockets, and dim routes where darkness has become more than absence. They dislike strong light, confident noise, and creatures who carry emotional steadiness into a room without asking permission. Predatory but not always mindless, Gloam-Born often test illumination first. A district with repeated unexplained lamp failures may already have one.

They are not made of evil exactly. They are made of "less," and that proves close enough.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Incorporeal Shade:** Many mundane physical attacks are weakened unless backed by force, symbolism, or magic.

• **Dark Pulse:** Once per scene, a Gloam-Born may spill a wave of oppressive dimness that imposes Disadvantage through dread, uncertainty, or sight loss.

• **Shadow Affinity:** It gains strong positional advantage in poor light or against targets relying on vision alone.

• **Predator of Bright Things:** Visible courage, lanterns, and magical light often draw its focused hostility.

Aetherkin

Threat: 4
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Stardust Beam — 1d8+1

Aetherkin are serene astral elementals shaped like humanoid figures of drifting starlight, dust, and pale radiant vapor. Their bodies are outlined only loosely, as though identity has been sketched in constellations rather than flesh, and when they move they leave slow fading trails of luminous particles in the air. Their faces are often indistinct until they choose to focus, at which point the viewer gets the unnerving sensation of being studied by a philosophy rather than a person.

In Limbo they appear through Astral seams, observatory routes, dream-sky passages, and old thresholds tied more to thought and distance than to geography. Some are contemplative and aloof, observing local beings with what may be compassion, curiosity, or the first stage of disassembly. Others are active wardens, messengers, or combatants acting on motives so wide that local panic barely registers to them. They are difficult to read and often more difficult to anger—right until something sacred to their pattern is damaged.

An Aetherkin is one of those beings people call beautiful just before asking whether beauty is supposed to be this terrifying.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Astralbody:** Psychic attack, dream pressure, and lesser mental interference trouble them very little.

• **Astral Shift:** They may reposition instantly across short distances, passing around obstacles with maddening calm.

• **Stardust Beam**: Their ranged assault is precise, coldly elegant, and often ignores minor cover made of mere clutter.

• **Unsettling Serenity**: Many creatures struggle to read threat properly when facing an Aetherkin, because it does not behave like anything that should need anger in order to win.

HUMAN WORLD INDIVIDUALS

People from the waking world who have crossed too far, fallen through the wrong door, or become entangled in Limbo's shadowed paths. Some are victims. Some are hunters.

Human Soldier

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Rifle — 1d10; Combat Knife — 1d6

A Human Soldier in Limbo is, first and foremost, a person who expected a chain of command, recognizable terrain, and the rough comfort of enemies staying inside known categories. Instead, they have found fungus-lit tunnels, hidden doors, impossible districts, and creatures no briefing officer in their right mind would have signed off on as a morale-positive educational experience. Their uniform, gear, posture, and trained reactions still mark them clearly as military: disciplined, alert, quick to assess lines of fire and movement, and often visibly struggling to reconcile training with the fact that the closet just contained a little man with a lantern and civic authority.

Soldiers come into Limbo through field exercises gone wrong, classified incidents, occult military interference, breach zones near bases or depots, and the occasional very bad decision involving recovery teams sent into the wrong anomaly. Some adapt faster than expected. Others cling so hard to procedure that the procedure itself becomes a kind of emotional shelter. Even frightened soldiers remain dangerous, because fear in trained hands still knows how to point a weapon.

A Human Soldier is not built for Limbo, but war teaches people how to become useful under insult.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Tactical Training**: Soldiers gain Advantage in disciplined movement, cover use, suppression, and clean response to obvious threat.

• **Suppressing Fire**: A successful ranged exchange may deny movement, spoil a charge, or impose Disadvantage on the next aggressive action of the pinned target.

• **Combat Discipline**: Sudden violence, noise, and confusion rattle them less than ordinary civilians, though not always less than they admit.

• **Limited Context**: Supernatural, symbolic, or dream-linked threats may confuse their otherwise solid battlefield instincts until experience catches up.

Private Investigator

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Revolver — 1d8+1

The Private Investigator arrives in Limbo with a long coat, sharp eyes, tired posture, and exactly the sort of stubborn curiosity that gets ordinary people lost in extraordinary places. Whether they are a classic gumshoe, modern missing-person specialist, freelance snoop, insurance shadow, or local investigator in too deep, the essential traits remain: they notice what

others miss, distrust official stories on principle, and keep pushing scenes that clearly want them to leave. Their clothes are usually practical, their hands may shake less than expected, and they tend to wear stress like a poorly hidden second collar.

Investigators most often enter Limbo while following disappearances, occult rumors, repeated trespass events, impossible crime scenes, or one witness too many claiming that the child went "through the wall." Once inside, many adapt through observation rather than force. They read rooms well, question people relentlessly, and learn routes through pattern instead of belonging. Some become useful Vigil allies. Some become nuisances. A few become something worse: people who now know just enough to keep looking.

An investigator is dangerous because even fear does not fully cure them of asking the next question.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Spot Detail:** Once per scene, the Investigator may automatically notice a minor but meaningful clue others would likely overlook.

• **Street Nerves:** They perform well in shady, tense, criminal, or semi-official conversations where ordinary folk start looking guilty for no reason.

• **Suspicious Mind:** They gain Advantage when checking stories, examining contradictions, or pursuing hidden motive.

• **Not a Front-Liner:** In direct sustained combat, they are more reliant on cover, nerve, and cleverness than durability.

Sheriff

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Shotgun — 1d10; Baton — 1d6

A Sheriff enters Limbo with the authority of local law still sitting in the shoulders whether the realm deserves it or not. Their bearing is practical, used to dealing with frightened townsfolk, drunks, domestic disasters, and the sort of emergencies that must be managed before anyone has time to panic elegantly. Whether from a rural county, small community, frontier town, or old provincial district in the Human World, a Sheriff brings habit, decisiveness, and the kind of courage that is less theatrical than useful. The hat, if present, helps.

Sheriffs usually arrive through missing-person cases, roadside anomalies, rural breaches, old property routes, or the sort of half-believed local haunting no one should ever have investigated alone. Once in Limbo, they often adapt better than expected—not because they understand it quickly, but because authority, reassurance, and practical command still matter even when the walls are wrong. Civilians trust them. Frightened people listen to them. Even some Creeps grudgingly respect them after the second or third incident report.

A Sheriff is rarely the smartest person in an occult scene, but they are often the one most likely to keep everyone from making it worse all at once.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Authority Presence:** Sheriffs gain Advantage when giving urgent lawful commands to frightened civilians or uncertain bystanders.

• **Rally:** Once per scene, a Sheriff may steady nearby allies against panic, fear, or disorder through pure command presence.

• **Practical Courage**: They are less likely than ordinary civilians to freeze under direct threat.

• **Measured Force**: A Sheriff often favors containment, control, and keeping people alive over theatrical aggression.

Police Officer

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 1
Attack: Service Pistol — 1d8+1; Baton — 1d6

A Police Officer in Limbo is a patrol-trained responder dropped into an environment no urban academy would ever approve as a realistic scenario. Their instincts are still useful: scan exits, identify hands, protect civilians, control distance, assess threat, keep the scene from spiraling. Their uniform or plainclothes profile marks them as someone used to functioning inside systems, city rhythms, and public stress. Unfortunately, Limbo is very rude to systems and worse to expectations.

Officers enter through active chases, missing persons responses, occult calls nobody took seriously enough soon enough, subway or building anomalies, and city-adjacent breaches where strange events first pass as bad urban rumor. Their reactions vary widely. Some cling to training and do well because of it. Others struggle when rules stop matching environment. Most remain dangerous because even confusion does not erase reflexes, and reflexes matter.

A Police Officer is at their best when the scene still has enough ordinary panic in it to resemble a problem from home.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Quick Reflexes**: Officers gain Advantage on sudden draws, quick reactions, and immediate response to visible threat.

• **Tactical Dodge**: Once per fight, an Officer may gain a strong defensive edge through movement, cover use, or practiced survival instinct.

• **Crowd-Sense**: They perform well in public chaos, witness-heavy incidents, and urban stress scenes.

• **Procedural Reliance**: The more symbolic, dream-based, or reality-bent the threat becomes, the less their training alone can solve it.

Child (Age 7–12)

Threat: 0
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: Improvised flailings — 1d4 at most

A child in Limbo is not a combatant, and the setting works best when that remains true. Children arrive through closets, bedroom doors, dream corridors, under-bed routes, schoolroom breaches, old nursery seams, and any threshold emotionally primed enough to prefer innocence as a traveler. They are frightened, curious, stubborn, overwhelmed, imaginative, and often much more central to the scene than any adult would prefer. Their clothes, toys, habits, and emotional state can all matter. Their fear can feed things. Their trust can redirect things. Their stories can accidentally describe the truth before the adults admit it is there.

A child may become the reason a Patrol entered the scene at all. They may be the lost person, the witness, the bait, the dream-anchor, the survivor, or the one being quietly protected from how strange everything has become. Some children adapt to Limbo with alarming speed. Others do not. Both states are dangerous in different ways. The Creepmaster should

always remember that the child's emotional logic may matter more than their physical strength.

The child is not an enemy. The child is the part of the scene everyone else is trying not to fail.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dream Presence:** Children often attract or affect dream-linked phenomena more strongly than adults.

• **Dream Echo:** Once per scene, a child may unintentionally produce a harmless but meaningful illusion, omen, memory-image, or emotional reaction in the environment.

• **Fragile:** Children are physically vulnerable and should not be treated as routine targets unless the tone has become much darker than most **CREEPS!** tables want.

• **Emotional Center:** Protecting, calming, or losing the child may strongly affect Clocks, panic, morale, and scene shape.

S.W.A.T. Officer

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 2
Attack: SMG — 1d10; Combat Knife — 1d6

A S.W.A.T. Officer enters Limbo carrying armor, breaching tools, trained aggression, and the sort of mission focus that looks reassuring right up until the enemy turns out to be made of grief and teeth. Broadly speaking, they are better prepared for violent uncertainty than most Human World visitors: disciplined under fire, practiced in stacking through doors, protecting teammates, and responding to hostage or crisis conditions where hesitation costs lives. Their gear is good, their movement is efficient, and their confidence is often earned. It is simply not always calibrated for talking wardrobes.

S.W.A.T. entry into Limbo usually comes through tactical responses to "active threat" calls, containment operations, black-site breach failures, occult raids gone wrong, or the weaponized optimism of officials who believed the heavily armored option was the same as the informed one. Once inside, they often perform well against obvious combat pressure and poorly against symbolic or dream-driven complications—at least until someone explains the problem in terms their training can metabolize.

A S.W.A.T. Officer in Limbo is not subtle. This is not always a flaw.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Heavy Vest:** Their Armor is strong against ordinary ballistic, blade, and impact threats.

• **Team Tactics:** They gain Advantage when operating with clear formation, covering fire, and coordinated breach logic.

• **Flashbang:** Once per fight, a S.W.A.T. Officer may disrupt a close area with blinding, deafening force, imposing severe disorientation on the unprepared.

• **Overprepared for the Wrong World**: Their gear is excellent for violence and less excellent for dream logic, social nuance, or architectural betrayal.

Paramedic

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Improvised tools — 1d4 or situational

A Paramedic in Limbo is a medical responder forced to bring calm into scenes that have no right to deserve it. They are trained for blood, panic, broken bodies, compromised breathing, screaming witnesses, and the practical cruelty of emergencies—but not, usually, for fungal tunnels, threshold entities, or children who insist the room is asleep and should not be woken. Their uniforms, bags, posture, and verbal habits mark them immediately as people who have spent long hours trying to keep strangers alive while others make noise around them. That skill transfers surprisingly well.

Paramedics arrive through emergency calls, ambulance-linked anomalies, hospital breaches, school incidents, and situations where one real-world crisis concealed a stranger one behind it. In Limbo they become invaluable very quickly. They can steady panic, assess injury, improvise care, and keep the living from becoming the dead while everyone else worries about the door. They are often among the most humanly admirable figures in a scene, which sadly does not protect them from being scared.

The world is improved by medics. Limbo merely has the bad manners to test that proposition constantly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Emergency Aid**: Once per encounter, a Paramedic may significantly stabilize, treat, or temporarily restore a wounded ally through practical field care.

• **Calm Under Pressure**: Panic scenes, blood, urgency, and civilian distress rattle them less than most.

• **Triage Eye**: They quickly identify who is most at risk and what kind of harm is actually happening.

• **Not Built for Front-Line Combat**: They can improvise under threat, but direct violence is not their intended role.

Scientist

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Improvised equipment — 1d4 or situational

A Scientist in Limbo is a researcher, analyst, or technical specialist confronted with the terrible thrill of discovering that reality is bigger than the grant application suggested. Their clothing and gear vary—lab coat, field jacket, environmental suit, academic practicalwear, industrial harness—but they all share a common profile: attentive eyes, a mind trying to model the impossible fast enough to remain useful, and a dangerous willingness to keep observing long after emotional self-preservation would have preferred retreat. Their first instinct is often not "run," but "what are the conditions?"

Scientists enter Limbo through anomaly studies, experimental sites, observatories, particle facilities, energy labs, medical research wings, biotech accidents, dimensional theory projects, and every story that begins with "we thought we had it contained." Some collapse under the setting's refusal to remain measurable. Others become frighteningly

competent once they realize method still helps, even here. Many develop an unnerving affection for note-taking under pressure.

A Scientist is rarely physically imposing, but their value increases sharply the moment nobody else can explain what the room is doing.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Analytical Mind**: Scientists gain Advantage when identifying patterns, weak points, operational logic, or environmental anomalies.

• **Hypothesis**: Once per scene, a Scientist may infer a likely weakness, behavior pattern, or functional truth about an unfamiliar creature or phenomenon.

• **Specialist Knowledge**: They excel when the problem can be observed, compared, tested, or reasoned about.

• **Dangerous Curiosity**: They may continue investigating long after wiser people have upgraded the scene to "retreat."

Journalist

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: None to speak of; improvised force — 1d4 at most

A Journalist in Limbo is a witness with professional momentum. Whether reporter, documentarian, local news investigator, photojournalist, podcaster, columnist, or one very determined independent stringer, they are driven by narrative instinct, social nerve, and the belief that hidden things should not remain hidden just because the powerful or the frightened would prefer them to. Their tools may include camera gear, notebooks, microphones, recorders, phones, old-fashioned press badges, or simply the uncanny ability to ask the one question a liar hates most.

They arrive through investigations, disappearance chains, urban legends, cover-ups, disaster sites, school stories, municipal scandals, or by following rumors no one else wanted printed. In Limbo, a Journalist can be maddening, brave, useful, doomed, or all four in quick succession. They speak to witnesses, notice public tension, preserve detail, and put pressure on secrecy simply by existing. This makes them a natural ally, liability, or both to the Vigil depending on how diplomatic everyone feels that day.

A Journalist is proof that curiosity and public duty can become indistinguishable under enough pressure.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Expose**: Once per scene, a Journalist may weaken a target's social standing, authority, or credibility by bringing uncomfortable truth or public attention to bear.

• **Observant**: They are good at spotting telling detail, reaction, or contradiction in public-facing scenes.

• **Witness Handler**: Frightened people often talk to them more readily than they talk to officials.

• **Compulsion to Document**: They may keep recording, writing, or observing in circumstances where normal self-preservation has submitted a formal complaint.

Security Guard

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Baton — 1d6; Flashlight Bash — 1d4

A Security Guard in Limbo is the sort of working person who has spent years being underpaid to notice

suspicious things and is now being asked to professionally absorb the fact that the suspicious thing has become a whole realm. Mall guards, warehouse guards, museum watchmen, gated facility patrols, bank security, private contract guards, graveyard night watch—whatever the exact profession, the profile is familiar: steady shoes, practical flashlight, imperfect authority, and more experience with empty hallways than anyone ought to need. They know buildings, routine, doors, after-hours sounds, and when something in a corridor is wrong even before they can say why.

They usually enter Limbo while checking disturbances, pursuing intruders, investigating alarms, doing rounds, or following the extremely regrettable logic that if the camera shows movement behind the locked storage door, somebody should go look alone. Some freeze. Some adapt. Many prove more useful than expected simply because they are used to being awake when everyone else is not and responsible when no one important is nearby.

A Security Guard is not glamorous. That is part of why they fit Limbo so well.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Steady Nerves**: Security Guards often handle dark corridors, late-night tension, and suspicious noises better than civilians.

• **Block**: Once per fight, a Guard may gain a strong defensive edge by bracing, interposing, or using practical cover well.

• **Watchman's Eye**: They are good at noticing tampering, intrusion, and changes in a controlled environment.

• **Limited Authority**: Their confidence works best in spaces where procedure, property, or routine still mean something. In full dream-chaos, that advantage weakens quickly.

CHAPTER 22: NEIGHBORING REALMS

Limbo is not alone, and it never has been.

A realm built on thresholds cannot remain culturally sealed for long. Roads, portals, closetways, fractured passages, river paths, dream leaks, diplomatic corridors, and bad decisions all ensure that Limbo exists in constant relationship with its neighbors. Some of those relationships are profitable. Some are hostile. Some are old enough that no one remembers whether they began as trade, trespass, conquest, or a misunderstanding involving a ritual door and the wrong moon. Most are all of these at different times.

The realms described below are among the powers and cultures most likely to touch Limbo's borders, markets, shrines, hidden routes, and political nerves. Their people arrive as merchants, pilgrims, spies, smugglers, diplomats, explorers, refugees, lost apprentices, military scouts, magical opportunists, and travelers whose confidence exceeded their map. Some have standing arrangements with the Vigil. Some test those arrangements constantly. Some pretend diplomacy while preparing contingencies. Others pretend indifference while quietly buying everything not nailed down.

For the Creepmaster, these neighboring cultures serve several important functions. They broaden Limbo's world, provide a steady source of foreign goods and foreign trouble, and remind the table that the realm is not a closed underworld but a crossroads under pressure. A portal breach may not produce "a monster" in the abstract. It may produce an Emberhearth retrieval squad, a Thryx whisper-envoy, a Murkdren omen-seeker, or a Gloomwell trade dispute with knives hidden under the ledger. That matters. It keeps danger cultural as well as physical.

The following entries present each neighboring culture as a living society rather than a mere encounter table. Each offers its own politics, values, goods, habits, and assumptions about Limbo—assumptions that are often revealing, occasionally insulting, and rarely harmless.

The Emberhearth Dominion

The **Emberhearth Dominion** is one of the most openly martial powers at Limbo's edge: a volcanic empire of scale-skinned warriors, rigid command traditions, and disciplined sorcerers who regard softness as a flaw best corrected by hardship or fire. Their territories stretch across chains of active volcanic lands linked by lava tunnels, basalt fortresses, ash roads, fumarole passes, and heat-black citadels built as much to endure eruption as to repel invasion. To outsiders, Emberhearth civilization can appear severe to the point of obsession. To the Emberhearth, it is merely proper.

Everything in the Dominion teaches the same lesson: endurance is truth.

Its people are shaped by heat, labor, hierarchy, and the constant presence of contained violence. Smoke is

ordinary. Fire is educational. Discipline is not an ideal but a civic expectation. Even their architecture reflects the Dominion's values. Their cities are not grown toward ornament first, but toward permanence, defensibility, and command. Towers are square-shouldered. Causeways are broad. Courtyards are built for drill as often as for beauty. Public spaces imply order. Public failures imply consequence.

The Emberhearth themselves are reptilian humanoids, though the exact scale, color, build, and cast of their physical forms varies by lineage and caste tradition. Some are heavy-plated and basalt-dark, with horned brows and ember-bright eyes. Others are sleek, long-limbed, and ash-scaled, bred for scouting, sorcery, or the ritual disciplines of the Pyre-Orders. In all cases, they carry themselves with a cultivated sense of composure that can read as dignity, arrogance, or threat depending on the circumstances. They are a people trained from youth to understand posture as a form of language.

Honor is central to Emberhearth culture, but it is not the sentimental, individualistic kind that outsiders often expect. Honor in the Dominion is inseparable from rank, function, and proper place within the greater structure. It is a discipline of relationship: superior to subordinate, order to order, oath to duty, flame to vessel. A person's worth is not measured primarily by self-expression but by how well they bear the burden assigned to them, how cleanly they execute their role, and how little their weakness inconveniences the machine around them. This makes the Dominion capable of astonishing acts of sacrifice, loyalty, and composure under pressure. It also makes them unforgiving of unpredictability, improvisation, and the kinds of independent eccentricity that flourish so naturally in Limbo.

At the top of the Dominion's hierarchy stands the **Ashforged Emperor**, an immortal salamander-kin sovereign who is at once monarch, war symbol, and spiritual fact. Whether the Emperor is truly immortal in the literal sense or merely occupies a succession so ritually continuous that the distinction has lost practical meaning depends on who tells the story. In Emberhearth itself, such questions are viewed as unserious. The Emperor reigns. That is enough. Power flows downward through rigid military castes, noble-command houses, and specialist orders whose responsibilities are both civic and martial. Governance is not cleanly separated from war-readiness because the Dominion does not consider such a separation wise.

The great stabilizing and sanctifying force within this structure is the network of **Pyre-Orders**: sorcerer-warrior schools whose members act as ritual specialists, doctrinal guardians, battlefield casters, historical archivists, and spiritual authorities. The Pyre-Orders do not sit outside power. They define much of its legitimacy. To the Dominion, flame is not merely a practical force but a civilizing one. Fire purifies, disciplines, tempers, reveals weakness, and leaves behind only what deserves to remain. The Pyre-Orders teach those truths with equal comfort in temple halls and campaign grounds.

Their relationship with Limbo is tense, asymmetrical, and never entirely settled. Trade exists, but only minimally. The Dominion has little sentimental regard for Limbo and sees it as both strategically curious and culturally unfinished. To Emberhearth eyes, Limbo is a place of unstable roads, diluted authority, soft commerce, fungus tolerance, sentimental shrine behavior, and an alarming willingness to let too many kinds of people exist in the same district at once. This produces in many Dominion officials a tone of patrician disdain barely masking strategic interest. Limbo is "unworthy of conquest… for now" not because it lacks value, but because it lacks the kind of

value the Dominion prefers to spend troops stabilizing all at once.

That has not prevented border pressure. Minor incursions, ritual retrieval missions, unauthorized scouting, heat-tunnel penetrations, and educational war simulations have all brought Emberhearth forces into conflict with the Vigil. Some violations are official. Others are deniable, conducted by ambitious commanders, runaway nobles, competitive Pyre apprentices, or specialist units who believed their task sufficiently important to ignore jurisdiction. The Dominion's common trespassers in Limbo include militant squads, sorcerous trainees, retrieval teams, exile-hunters, and ritual envoys sent to recover someone or something the Emberhearth consider theirs.

Economically, the Dominion exports goods shaped by its landscape and values: fire-infused metals, volcanic glass weaponry, furnace ceramics, heat salts, ember-beast products, and disciplined military craft. Their metallurgical work is respected even by peoples who loathe them. Their glasswork is dangerous, beautiful, and often too sharp for polite handling. Their beast stock includes the infamous **magma beetles**, whose utility in heat transport, hauling, and certain industrial processes makes them prized in specific markets and deeply unwelcome in careless ones.

In return, the Emberhearth import what their land produces poorly or what their culture undervalues until it becomes inconvenient: books, treated softwoods, certain foods, select textiles, and occasionally alchemical or dream-sensitive materials that their own traditions produce only under constraint. Their need for books in particular is more significant than outsiders often realize. A disciplined empire still needs records, histories, diagrams, doctrine, and magical notation. Fire may teach, but someone must write down the lesson before it consumes the room.

For the Creepmaster, the Dominion is useful precisely because it is so coherent. Emberhearth visitors are rarely random. They arrive with purpose, rank, and internal logic. A Pyre-Order Sorcerer should feel unlike a hedge magician from Limbo. An Ember Warrior should move like a person raised in formation culture. A Lava Scout should read terrain, heat, and exposure with unnerving clarity. Even when they are lost, they should seem like they disapprove of the experience professionally.

In play, the Emberhearth Dominion lends itself beautifully to stories of military retrieval, border testing, ritual politics, runaway nobility, philosophical culture clash, and the question of what happens when a highly ordered civilization must operate within a realm that thrives on crooked adaptation. Their presence in Limbo should feel hot, deliberate, and just a little insulting.

Mechanically, Emberhearth beings commonly possess resistance to fire, a relative weakness to severe cold, and some degree of natural armor or plated resilience. But their greatest threat is often cultural rather than numerical. They bring structure with them, and structure can be frightening when it has decided you are the irregularity.

The Gloomwell Compact

If the Emberhearth Dominion is all hierarchy and heat, the **Gloomwell Compact** is commerce, secrecy, and cultivated dusk. It is a federation of fungus-lit cavern cities, humid trade hollows, lantern markets, under-root roads, and merchant-run enclaves linked not by rigid imperial command but by overlapping economic appetite. The Compact is broad, wealthy, suspicious, and clever enough to survive without pretending to unity it does not possess. It is governed, to the extent that such a term can be used cleanly, through bargains, leverage, reputation, controlled scarcity, and the kind of political smiling that should make any sensible traveler count their fingers afterward.

The lands of the Compact are deep and dim. Vast caverns open into glowing fungal forests, fungal farms, luminous wetlands, polished market chambers, and trade cities lit by lantern towers, bioluminescent growth walls, crystal cages, and slow cold fire. Moisture clings to the stone. Voices carry oddly. Every district seems to have at least one market lane where the dark is not dispelled so much as curated. To outsiders, Gloomwell can feel secretive to the point of theater. To its inhabitants, that secrecy is simply literacy. Not everything worth knowing must be announced under full light.

The peoples of the Compact are diverse, though goblin-kin cultures dominate much of its visible civic and trade life. They are often described by outsiders as gnarled, narrow, or dim-built, which tells one more about the outsider than the subject. Gloomwell peoples are practical, expressive in private ways, and socially trained to read nuance quickly. They value trade not merely as profit, but as proof of intelligence. To buy well, negotiate well, hide well, and know when silence is worth more than speech are all marks of cultivation. Children in many Compact cultures are raised in almost complete gloom until adolescence, a practice rooted in the old belief that "darkness is the first teacher." The phrase means many things: that one should listen before speaking, feel before declaring, perceive before presuming, and respect what can be learned when the world is not flattened by glare.

This upbringing shapes everything. Compact society is rich in subtle visual codes, soft-light etiquette, tonal signaling, and the controlled use of revelation. Brightness is not automatically good. Exposure is not automatically honest. A person who must illuminate everything to feel secure is, in Gloomwell eyes, probably telling on themselves.

The government of the Compact reflects this same mixture of sophistication and instability. At its center sits a fractious ruling body composed of **seven Lumen-Guilds**, each represented by a merchant prince or princess whose title is half civic office, half market threat. These guilds are not clean ideological parties. They are trade factions, lineage interests, industrial powers, patronage networks, smuggling-

adjacent influence webs, and diplomatic entities all at once. Power shifts constantly among them through dealmaking, controlled shortages, marriages, sabotage, cooperative ventures, and the occasional public scandal artfully timed to ruin only one quarter's shipping season. The result is a culture whose politics can seem chaotic until one realizes the chaos is carefully managed.

This has made the Compact extraordinarily good at surviving as a neighboring power to Limbo. Of all the major nearby cultures, Gloomwell probably interacts with Limbo most often on ordinary practical terms. Trade is frequent. Merchant traffic is common. Portal taxation disputes, while sometimes severe in local consequence, are usually less about hatred than about money with uniforms attached. The Vigil are regarded with wary admiration: respected as the sort of authority one needs at a crossroads, distrusted as the sort of authority that inevitably wants a larger ledger. Compact traders often mock Vigil regulation in private and rely on it heavily in public.

Trespassers from the Gloomwell Compact are common, though not always hostile in the straightforward sense. Smugglers, poachers, lantern-blade escorts, fungal harvest thieves, overambitious guild factors, and contract-runners often cross into Limbo through legitimate or semi-legitimate channels. They are usually there for profit, acquisition, or information rather than conquest. This makes them less immediately dramatic than an Emberhearth incursion and in some ways much more troublesome. A stolen dream-reactive fungus can ruin an entire district before anyone thinks to ask who carried it in.

The Compact's economy is excellent at producing precisely the sorts of goods Limbo values: glowing mushrooms, myconid alchemical reagents, crystal lanterns, medicinal molds, shadow-silk cloth, damp-resistant wrapping, low-light tools, filtration goods, and all the luminous small necessities of subterranean life. Their lantern craft is especially famous, ranging from utilitarian crystal cage lamps to breathtakingly beautiful domestic pieces that make poor financial decisions feel elegant for a few hours. Shadow-silk, woven in some districts from fungal thread and in others from stranger stock, remains one of their most coveted exports—light, quiet, dark, and expensive enough to become identity.

In return, Gloomwell imports enchanted tools, books, and dream-infused supplies, among many other goods. Their appetite for books resembles the Emberhearth need in one broad sense and differs sharply in temperament. The Compact wants records, diagrams, trade law, occult marginalia, hidden histories, copied route books, and anything else that turns knowledge into leverage. A book in Gloomwell is not merely literacy. It is inventory of influence.

Socially, the Compact is often misunderstood by outsiders who mistake secrecy for cruelty or commerce for shallowness. In truth, Gloomwell culture has deep traditions of reciprocity, obligation, apprenticeship, and household loyalty. Family and guild are often intertwined. Patronage matters. Hospitality exists, though it is rarely naïve. A guest may be welcomed beautifully and profiled aggressively at the same table. These are not contradictions in Gloomwell ethics. They are signs of competence.

Typical Gloomwell figures encountered in Limbo include the smooth-voiced **Gloom Trader**, who can sell, evaluate, flatter, and quietly insult in one graceful transaction; the **Myconid Alchemist**, whose stock may heal, poison, preserve, illuminate, sedate, or dramatically reorganize a customer's week; and the **Lantern-Blade Bodyguard**, a professional escort whose mix of discretion and violence reflects the Compact's view that beauty and self-defense should not be separated by class prejudice.

For the Creepmaster, the Gloomwell Compact is extraordinarily versatile. It can provide friendly merchants, smugglers with standards, fungal plagues, treaty trouble, economic pressure, underlit elegance, lantern-lit espionage, counterfeit route permits, cultured blackmail, and all the many complications produced when a wealthy neighbor genuinely likes dealing with you but likes winning more. Their presence should make Limbo feel richer, dimmer, and more entangled.

Mechanically, Gloomwell beings often possess darkvision, resistance to mild toxins or environmental taints, and relative vulnerability to sudden bright light. But again, their true edge is cultural. They know how to operate in shadow without treating shadow as a handicap. In Limbo, that is often more valuable than armor.

The Sunken Marches of Murkdren

The **Sunken Marches of Murkdren** lie in a very different relation to Limbo than either Emberhearth or Gloomwell. Where those powers engage the realm as market, border problem, or strategic curiosity, Murkdren regards Limbo with something much closer to spiritual suspicion. To the marsh peoples of that drowned land, portals are not clever opportunities or regrettable infrastructure. They are **hungry mouths**. Limbo is not merely foreign. It is unsettling in a way they consider cosmologically unclean.

This makes Murkdren one of the most fascinating neighboring cultures in the setting, because its distance from Limbo is not a matter of physical access. There are routes between them. Those routes simply make everyone involved uneasy.

The Sunken Marches are a vast expanse of black marshes, slow floodplains, reed forests, drowned ruins, old stone causeways, whispering waters, and fog-sunk horizons where distance is measured less by land than by channels, omens, and memory. The place feels old in the wet way certain landscapes do, as though every year has sunk without truly leaving. Half-drowned temples lean out of the reeds. Causeways vanish and reappear by season or by stranger logic. Pools reflect skies no one trusts. Whole communities drift, anchor, uproot, and drift again as if permanence were too dry a concept to survive there.

The Murkdren themselves are amphibious humanoids—tall, reed-thin, slick-skinned, often draped in waterweed shawls or mud-dyed wraps, with elongated features shaped for wet air, marsh silence, and patient observation. Their bodies seem almost built from the same visual vocabulary as the landscape: narrow, fluid, green-black, silver-brown, river-pale, and hard to read until near enough that one realizes they have been reading you for some time already.

Their society is deeply spiritual, but not in the organized monumental sense seen in more urban powers. Murkdren culture revolves around **witchcraft, omen-reading, marsh lore, and relationships with water spirits** whose whispers move across the reeds and channels in ways outsiders often find maddeningly indirect. They do not separate magic, ecology, and governance as cleanly as other peoples try to. A marsh spirit may be a local fact, a political concern, an ancestor echo, and a trade hazard all at once. This is not considered confusing within Murkdren thought. It is considered honest.

Politically, the Marches are clan-based. Power sits with lineages, kin marshes, causeway circles, and ritual households, all held in unstable but meaningful relationship through the authority of the **Bog-Mothers**—powerful witches chosen not by inheritance alone but by omen, ritual sign, and the collective recognition that some people can hear what the marsh is saying without immediately misusing it. Councils meet in floating huts that drift through sacred

waterways, a practice both beautiful and deeply practical, since any political body in that land should remain mobile enough to survive weather, feud, and spirits taking offense.

Murkdren governance feels diffuse to outsiders but should not be mistaken for weak. It is adaptive, local, and spiritually embedded. Law exists, but it is spoken through omen and custom more often than through code. A causeway may be closed not because a clerk filed notice, but because the reeds bent the wrong way for three dawns and the right elder listened. Such governance is maddening to bureaucrats and extremely difficult to conquer cleanly.

The Marches trade with Limbo only rarely, and conflict between them is often severe when it occurs. Murkdren suspicion of portals means that Limbo's entire way of life can appear to them reckless at best and predatory at worst. A society that normalizes threshold traffic, route commerce, and unstable crossings looks dangerously intimate with hunger from the Murkdren point of view. They do not easily believe that one can "manage" such things forever.

As a result, Murkdren trespassers in Limbo are usually accidental, reluctant, desperate, or driven by specific spiritual necessity. Lost apprentices, rogue druids, omen-seekers, flood-driven refugees, or spirit-wounded witches may cross into Limbo. Full deliberate missions usually arise only when a spirit has crossed first, a portal breach has started poisoning local marshes, or some witch-clan has decided that something in Limbo must be stopped before the waters themselves remember the offense.

Their exports are specialized and powerful: herbal reagents, omen reeds, spirit-inflected marsh products, reed-woven armor and masks, sacred mud compounds, and above all the enigmatic substances sometimes called **marsh spirits' whispers**, contained preparations or charms carrying dream-echo and omen resonance. Their imports are revealing: metal tools, stone, and arcane scrolls, all things that the marsh does not readily supply in stable quantity but which become necessary in serious ritual, construction, and defense.

Socially, the Murkdren are often quieter and more formally attentive than outsiders expect. Their speech patterns can seem elliptical because they do not treat directness as the only honest mode of language. They are excellent listeners, careful hosts, and unnerving judges of character. Hospitality exists among them as a serious moral act, but it is bound tightly to taboo, omen, and place. A guest treated well in one waterway may be unwelcome in the next. A promise made on a floating council platform may matter more than a contract signed anywhere else. Fire, loud metal, and careless arrogance all travel poorly there.

Typical Murkdren figures include the **Marsh Witch**, whose authority comes from spirit relation and omen literacy; the **Waterbound Scout**, a silent path-finder and watcher of channels; and the **Spirit-Touched Oracle**, who lives uncomfortably close to the whispering edge between guidance and possession. Their stories tend naturally toward haunting, environmental danger, spiritual diplomacy, and the question of whether the marsh is warning, threatening, or simply describing what it has already decided.

For the Creepmaster, Murkdren is invaluable when the tone needs to shift toward eerie spirituality, wet suspicion, and a neighboring culture whose mistrust of Limbo may be justified more often than the residents care to admit. They remind the setting that not every portal should be normalized and not every crossing should be loved.

Mechanically, Murkdren characters and creatures often possess improved capability in wetlands, some form of swim movement or water adaptation, and

sensitivity to fire. But their most important trait is interpretive. They live in a world of omen and spirit relation. When they say a road is wrong, they may not mean merely unsafe.

The Velvet Court of Thryx

If Murkdren fears Limbo and Emberhearth judges it, the **Velvet Court of Thryx** is fascinated by it.

The Court exists in a shimmering parallel dimension of glittering towers, dream-prism districts, impossible angles, soft purple void-light, and architecture so elegant it becomes threatening by refusing to explain itself. To call it fae-like is useful and insufficient. The Court is aristocratic, aesthetic, contractual, and profoundly dangerous in subtle ways. It values performance, secrets, art, social maneuver, beauty, wit, binding words, and the many refined cruelties that arise when a culture decides intrigue is not a byproduct of politics but one of its highest forms.

Thryx is not merely beautiful. It is curated. Its spaces are staged the way a duel is staged, the way a portrait is staged, the way a lie is staged so that even the truth enjoys standing near it. Spires glitter where geometry should have failed. Staircases lead elegantly to conclusions one was not prepared to agree to. Light pools in violet gradients that flatter everything except human certainty. Visitors from more practical cultures often find the Court intoxicating for an hour and exhausting thereafter. This is entirely by design.

The people of Thryx are elegant, glamoured, and socially weaponized from an early age. They may appear fae, noble, elf-like, spirit-limbed, or impossible to classify cleanly depending on lineage and glamour habit, but all share the same cultural insistence that appearances are never trivial. Beauty is not decorative there. It is rhetoric. A room persuades. A garment argues. A pause threatens. A smile negotiates. The Court's inhabitants are dangerous not because they are constantly violent, but because they are constantly *performing* in a society where performance carries legal, political, and magical consequence.

The government of Thryx rests with the **Velvet Thirteen**, a ring of Nobles each controlling a district-like dream-prism domain within the greater Court. These nobles do not govern through stable administrative hierarchy in the mortal sense. They govern through influence, patronage, layered obligation, social warfare, and binding arrangements that may be legal contract, artistic challenge, flirtation, blackmail, and ritual structure all at once. Intrigue is the primary political engine not because the Court is decadent and disordered, but because intrigue is how order there reproduces itself. Power hidden elegantly is still power.

Every district of Thryx has its own aesthetic grammar, social codes, forbidden jokes, dress expectations, sanctioned games, and preferred sins. Court life is therefore both dazzling and exhausting. A single misstep may be dismissed as amusing if done by a favored guest, or become the basis of a decade-long leverage relationship if done by someone useful. Outsiders who mistake this for frivolity often do not enjoy the correction.

The Court's relationship with Limbo is unpredictable but enduring. Trade exists, though in irregular pulses rather than the steady channels seen with Gloomwell. Conflict is rarely physical in the straightforward sense. Instead it emerges through contracts, diplomatic pressure, agents, scandal, manipulation, performed hospitality, and the slow seep of influence through gifts no one should have accepted without witnesses. Limbo fascinates the Court precisely because it is rough-edged, practical, and alive in ways Thryx often is not. Its markets, shrines, closetways, fungal roads, and hard-lived improvisations strike many Court nobles as charming, vulgar, moving, amusing, profitable, and spiritually refreshing, sometimes all at once.

This makes Thryx both a useful and dangerous neighbor. Court envoys may assist the Vigil in one crisis and cause the next one for reasons of romance, boredom, revenge, artistic experimentation, or dynastic sport. Their agents arrive as diplomats, performers, duelists, body attendants, archivists, whisper-brokers, entertainers, binders, and elegantly disastrous runaways. Limbo receives them because one cannot always refuse a neighbor bearing beauty, leverage, and very expensive cloth.

The Court's exports reflect its values: glamour enchantments, exotic fabrics, potions of mood alteration, social masks, whisper-contracts, etiquette charms, cultivated perfumes, and the infamous **fae-binding contracts** whose beauty often exceeds their mercy. These goods are sought after in Limbo for diplomacy, art, luxury, seduction, espionage, and very poor personal choices. Their imports are equally revealing. The Court craves metals, natural goods, and mundane trinkets. To many Thryx nobles, the handmade and ordinary possess a rough authenticity almost impossible to produce at home. A chipped mortal toy, a simple kitchen spoon, a miner's nail charm, or a plain iron key may fascinate them far more than a jewel they could commission locally in their sleep.

This appetite for "the mundane" is one of the Velvet Court's most dangerous habits. Court affection can turn objects, places, and people into fashionable obsessions. A Creep who becomes interesting to the wrong noble may find themselves gifted, courted, bound, studied, or socially maneuvered into a role they never agreed to audition for. The Court does not always understand that fascination feels like predation from the outside. Sometimes it understands that perfectly.

Typical Thryx figures include the **Court Envoy**, all poised courtesy and hidden motive; the **Velvet Duelist**, whose elegance in violence is as much social statement as combat technique; and the **Dream-Fae Minstrel**, capable of moving a room emotionally while stealing its leverage at the same time. Their stories naturally produce contract trouble, glamour hazards, mistaken invitations, duels of etiquette, political comedy with teeth, and the peculiar nightmare of being wanted for reasons that sound flattering until the fifth clause.

For the Creepmaster, the Velvet Court is ideal for introducing danger that smiles before it bites. Thryx lets the setting breathe in a different register: seductive, political, socially lethal, rich in performance, and morally soft-edged in the most hazardous way. Their presence in Limbo should always feel slightly unreal, slightly flattering, and a little too interested.

Mechanically, Court beings often excel in deception, performance, and glamour-based illusion. They are traditionally vulnerable to iron in one form or another, though the exact handling of that weakness may vary by creature and rank. As always, their deepest threat is not numeric. It is interpretive. A Velvet Court noble

can change a story simply by deciding it would look better if it belonged to them.

NPCs of the Gloomwell Compact

Gloom Trader

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Light Dagger — 1d4

A Gloom Trader is rarely dressed for war, but almost always dressed for advantage. They are usually lean goblin-kin or other cavern-bred folk wrapped in layered trade shawls, shadow-silk sashes, fungus-dyed gloves, and practical belts full of seals, satchels, and things they claim are invoices until someone asks to see them. Their eyes tend toward the reflective—black, amber, pearl-grey, or lantern-green—and they move with the composed caution of someone who has survived by reading rooms faster than rooms can read them. Even when smiling, a Gloom Trader often gives the impression that they are weighing the resale value of the conversation.

In Limbo, Gloom Traders are among the most familiar faces from neighboring realms. They arrive with fungus-light wares, alchemical curiosities, coded contracts, and the sort of cheerful ambiguity that makes a Vigil inspector reach automatically for a second ledger. Most are not frontline fighters and prefer not to bleed if a bargain can be arranged first. That said, they are not harmless. A Gloom Trader's real danger lies in how quickly they can change the social weather of a scene. They know who owes, who wants, who is lying, and who can be made to believe that overpaying was their own idea all along. There is often something faintly unnerving about them, not because they are overtly sinister, but because they are so completely at home in dimness, secrecy, and the soft rustle of leverage changing hands.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Darkvision:** Gloom Traders see clearly in darkness and suffer no ordinary penalty for working in low light.
• **Fungal Resilience:** They gain Advantage when resisting mild toxins, bad air, common fungal irritation, or spoiled underground food.
• **Flash-Puff Spores:** Once per scene, a Gloom Trader may burst a concealed fungal charge, filling a tiny area at Close range with blinding spores. Anyone caught in the burst must test **Awareness** or suffer **Disadvantage** on their next action.
• **Merchant's Instinct:** In scenes of bargaining, appraisal, or deceit, they often seem to know when fear, greed, or desperation has entered the room.

Myconid Alchemist

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Alchemical Spore Bomb — 1d6 poison, Close burst

Myconid Alchemists look like something halfway between a scholarly mushroom and an unfortunate medical philosophy. Their bodies are often squat, layered, and softly ridged, with pale caps, damp gill folds, root-fingered hands, and drifting motes of harmless—or allegedly harmless—spore dust always clinging to them. Some wear fungus-cured aprons and satchels full of vials, others drape themselves in woven moss wraps and reagent belts, but all tend to smell of tinctures, damp root, and at least one preparation no one should inhale casually. Their voices, where they speak aloud at all, are often soft and oddly calm, which only makes the explosions feel ruder.

Myconid Alchemists are support figures by habit and by preference. They do not usually stand in the front rank unless something has gone so catastrophically wrong that standing in the front rank has become the least embarrassing option available. Instead they heal,

disrupt, preserve, sedate, poison, numb, cleanse, smoke, clarify, and improve matters until they don't. They have a profoundly Gloomwell habit of approaching violence as a problem in chemistry rather than passion. Emotionally, they create a very particular kind of discomfort in a scene: the sense that one is being clinically assessed as a container that may soon require treatment, restraint, or dissolution.

Traits & Abilities:

- **Fungal Physiology:** Myconid Alchemists gain Advantage against mild poison, rot, spoilage, and common fungal hazards.
- **Toxic Skin:** A creature striking them bare-handed or grappling them at Reach must test **Endurance** or suffer **–10** on its next action from numbing irritation or spore contact.
- **Spore Bombs:** They commonly carry several prepared alchemical spore charges that burst into choking, toxic, or disorienting clouds.
- **Healing Mold Patch:** Once per scene, a Myconid Alchemist may apply a prepared fungal dressing that restores **1 point of damage** or grants **+10** to a Medicine-related recovery or stabilization test.
- **Cautious Combatant:** They prefer cover, distance, and controlled use of toxins over direct confrontation.

Lantern-Blade Bodyguard

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Curved Lantern-Blade — 1d6+1

Lantern-Blade Bodyguards are the sort of professionals who make violence look expensive. They are usually dressed in fitted low-light armor, half-masks, layered shoulder wraps, and belts carrying oil flasks, signal strips, and narrow utility blades alongside their primary curved weapon. Many carry a hooded glow-lantern or lantern-weapon hybrid whose light can be shuttered, flashed, narrowed, or turned into an ugly little tactical sermon at exactly the wrong moment for their enemy. Their faces tend toward stillness. Their posture says plainly that someone else in the room matters more than you do, and they are here to make that everyone's problem.

In Gloomwell society, such bodyguards serve merchant princes, guild envoys, fragile negotiators, important smugglers, and anyone wealthy enough to know that the dark belongs to whoever trained for it first. They are decisive fighters, not berserkers. They move cleanly, strike without wasted flourish, and are most dangerous in exactly the sort of half-lit market lane or tunnel passage where a panicked amateur begins guessing distances. Their presence often produces a very immediate emotional effect: conversation becomes careful, exits become interesting, and anyone considering treachery begins mentally recalculating the cost.

Traits & Abilities:

- **Low-Light Discipline:** Lantern-Blade Bodyguards gain Advantage on attacks, defense, or awareness-based tests in dim light, darkness, or fungus-lit conditions where others hesitate.
- **Lantern Blind:** Once per scene, they may flash a concealed or weapon-mounted light into a nearby foe's eyes. The target must test **Awareness** or suffer **Disadvantage** on its next action.
- **Guard's Commitment:** If protecting an employer, they will often step into danger first, intercept a blow, or make the escape path unpleasant for everyone else.
- **Trained Presence:** They are not subtle in the social sense, but they are excellent at making a room understand that escalation would be a mistake.

Gloomwell Tunnel Skulk

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Shortbow — 1d6

Tunnel Skulks are all angles, patience, and bad etiquette. These scouts and spies tend to be wiry goblin-kin or similarly light-framed cavern folk wrapped in shadow-silk cloaks, soft boots, climbing straps, and enough dark cloth to become a rumor in the wrong tunnel. Their faces are often narrow, quick-eyed, and hard to hold in memory once they are gone. They smell faintly of fungus rations, oil, damp dust, and the sort of private confidence that belongs only to someone who knows three ways into a room and four ways out.

A Tunnel Skulk is not built for a fair fight and would consider one a failure of planning. They excel at scouting, shadowing, route-reading, wall-crawling, and the little acts of theft or murder that begin from being someplace no one expected a body to fit. Many are employed by merchants, guilds, smugglers, or lantern courts, though some work purely for themselves. Their emotional effect on a scene is subtle but sharp: a sense that the walls are participating, that the tunnel is not empty simply because it is quiet, and that any confidence one felt about the rear approach was probably undeserved.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Wall-Crawler**: Tunnel Skulks may climb rough cavern walls, broken masonry, and fungal ridges without ordinary penalty.
• **Ambush Shot**: If they attack from concealment or against an unaware target, their first ranged hit deals **+3 damage**.
• **Shadow-Silk Cloak**: In dim light, darkness, or heavy tunnel clutter, they gain Advantage on stealthy movement and concealment.
• **Hit-and-Run Instinct**: If the fight becomes direct, they prefer to withdraw, reposition, and strike from a better angle rather than stand and trade blows.

NPCs of the Sunken Marches of Murkdren

Marsh Witch (Bog-Mother Disciple)

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Ritual Staff — 1d6+1

A Marsh Witch looks like the swamp learned to speak and had opinions about your future. Bog-Mother disciples tend to be tall, reed-thin, water-slick figures draped in hanging weeds, bead-work, marsh bones, shell charms, and strips of ritual cloth that never seem entirely dry. Their eyes are often pale, luminous, or reflective in odd ways, and many wear their hair long and rope-tangled with swamp flowers, mud-thread, or spirit tokens. They smell of wet reeds, bitter herbs, old smoke, and the underside of prophecy.

These witches are not simply spellcasters in a conventional sense. They are omen-workers, spirit-negotiators, and keepers of the uneasy relationship between Murkdren folk and the things listening beneath black water. They rarely waste power for spectacle. Instead they use it like a fisher uses a hook: precisely, patiently, and with full expectation that something will struggle once caught. In Limbo, a Marsh Witch feels wrong in a very specific way—too wet, too quiet, too certain of the local spiritual weather, as if the nearest puddle already told her your last mistake and your next one.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Amphibious**: Marsh Witches move and breathe comfortably in wet, flooded, or half-submerged terrain.

• **Swamp Sense**: They gain Advantage on tests involving marsh navigation, hidden water hazards, wetland pursuit, or sensing the presence of marsh spirits.
• **Marsh Sorcery**: Common workings include **Frost Nibble**, **Vine-Grasp**, and **Jitters Hex**, cast through spirit-lore, omen speech, and ritual focus.
• **Omen-Touched**: In scenes involving cursed water, spirit whisper, or wetland ritual, the Creepmaster may let the witch sense that something is wrong before its full nature is revealed.
• **Defensive Caster**: They prefer to slow, bind, or mislead enemies rather than overwhelm them directly.

Waterbound Scout

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Harpoon — 1d6+1

Waterbound Scouts are long-limbed marsh sentinels built for stillness and sudden violence. They wear algae masks, slick reed wraps, waterproof satchels, and layered skin or scale coverings that make them difficult to distinguish from marsh clutter until they move. Their weapons are practical and ugly: harpoons, hooked lines, knives suited for wet work, and signal whistles carved from bone or swamp shell. Even at rest, they often seem slightly forward-leaning, as though listening to water no one else heard.

A Waterbound Scout belongs to borders, causeways, drowned ruins, and the hard wet places where Murkdren suspicion becomes armed policy. They are patient trackers and excellent ambushers, willing to wait chest-deep in black water if that is what the route requires. To encounter one in Limbo is to feel suddenly observed by an ecosystem rather than by a person. They do not charge loudly. They appear, strike, pull, vanish, and let the terrain finish the lesson.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Amphibious**: Waterbound Scouts move and breathe in marsh, flood, or underwater conditions without difficulty.
• **Keen Hearing**: They gain Advantage on tests to detect movement, speech, or approach across water, reeds, or fog-soft terrain.
• **Harpoon Pull**: On a successful hit, the scout may drag the target toward Reach unless the target wins an opposed **Might** test.
• **Border Ambusher**: In water, mud, reeds, or flooded ruins, they gain Advantage on stealthy approach and initial positioning.
• **Patrol Discipline**: They work best as unseen sentries, flankers, and border defenders rather than as loud heroic fighters.

Spirit-Touched Oracle

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Spirit Pulse — 1d6 psychic

Spirit-Touched Oracles look as though sleep has been using them for correspondence. They are often slight, pale, and visibly burdened by things that do not entirely belong inside a body: drifting charm veils, talisman strings, ritual scars, river-glass eyes, whisper-beads, and a habit of turning their head as if someone just spoke from behind the world. Their clothing tends toward layered wraps, prayer cords, and herb bundles meant to keep the self tied firmly enough to the flesh that prophecy remains merely exhausting and does not become relocation.

These figures are not warriors by nature, though the spirits around them occasionally behave as though

they ought to be. Their presence in a scene is eerie in the best Murkdren sense: soft, mournful, and uncomfortably attentive. Oracles feel emotional residue strongly, and their reactions often tell more truth than their words. A room may seem colder when one enters. The air may feel listened to. Small sounds gain significance. They are guides, diviners, and spiritual warning systems first, combatants only when fate has run out of courtesy.

Traits & Abilities:
- **Spirit Sensitivity:** An Oracle gains Advantage when reading emotional residue, dream-stain, lingering presence, or spiritual disturbance.
- **Whisper of the Marsh:** Once per scene or investigation, the Oracle may ask a yes-or-no question of a nearby spirit presence; the answer is truthful to the degree the local forces are willing or able to provide it.
- **Spirit Pulse:** Their attack is not physical but a brief blast of psychic or spiritual pressure that startles, pains, or disorients.
- **Fire-Sensitive:** Like many Murkdren figures deeply attuned to wetland spirit forces, they are especially vulnerable to fire, heat, and aggressive flame-based magic.
- **Guide, Not Soldier:** They are most useful when revealing, warning, or interpreting rather than standing in open battle.

Mud Strider Warrior

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Barbed Spear — 1d6+1

Mud Strider Warriors are the shock troops of the Marches: broad-shouldered, mud-hardened fighters wearing reed-woven armor, layered hide, shell plates, and war paint mixed from marsh ash and spirit dye. Their spears are often barbed, hooked, or line-fitted for fighting in water and dragging enemies off causeway footing. They carry themselves with the steady confidence of people who know the terrain already chose their side.

These warriors are not flashy. They are wet, grim, and ruinously practical. In the marsh they move as if the sucking ground were solid doctrine, while outsiders stumble, curse, and begin rethinking their relationship to balance. Their emotional effect in a scene is immediate and physical: the sense that the land itself has produced a spear and would like the visitor to leave now, feet first if necessary.

Traits & Abilities:
- **Waterlogged Hide:** Their armor and hide layers grant **AR 1**, especially effective in wet terrain.
- **Marsh Strider:** They treat marsh difficult terrain as ordinary movement for purposes of advance, pursuit, and positioning.
- **Bog Drag:** If attacking from water, deep mud, or ambush among reeds, a Mud Strider may force the target to test **Grace** or be knocked prone or dragged off balance.
- **Line-Fighter:** They are disciplined front-rank combatants, especially dangerous when holding causeways, shallows, or narrow wet approaches.
- **Wetland Confidence:** They do not fear ugly footing the way strangers do, and they know exactly how much that matters.

NPCs of the Emberhearth Dominion

Ember Warrior

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Lava-Glass Blade — 1d6+2

An Ember Warrior looks like war was taught how to stand upright and salute. These front-line soldiers are scale-skinned, heat-tempered fighters clad in layered volcanic plate scraps, ash leather, basalt fittings, and disciplined insignia. Their faces are severe, their eyes ember-bright, and their weapons often seem slightly too sharp for sensible handling, especially the dark glittering lava-glass swords whose edges catch light like a wound remembering itself. Even their stillness feels drilled.

In battle, Ember Warriors are fearless to the point of insult. They advance as though flame were a civic right. They are not berserkers; they are worse. They are trained. Their discipline makes them emotionally oppressive in a scene. One does not merely face an Ember Warrior. One feels evaluated by a military culture that has already decided panic is a personal failing. In Limbo, their presence always suggests something larger behind them: a mission, an order, a command structure, a reason they are here at all.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fire Resistance**: Ember Warriors reduce or resist ordinary fire harm and suffer little from heat that would trouble others.
• **Cold Weakness**: Bitter cold, frost magic, and severe chill effects strike them harder than they would most creatures of similar endurance.
• **Heatwave Strike**: The first successful hit an Ember Warrior lands in a fight deals **+2 damage** as heat and aggression crest together.
• **Disciplined Advance**: They do not frighten easily and are difficult to disorganize through spectacle or gore.
• **Volcanic Armor**: Their patchwork plate and natural scaling combine to grant **AR 1**.

Pyre-Order Sorcerer

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Fire Lash — 2d4 fire

A Pyre-Order Sorcerer is unmistakable even before the heat starts misbehaving. They tend to be draped in basalt-thread robes, ember charms, ritual cords, polished ash-bead collars, and focus rods etched with flame geometry or order marks. Their scales are often marked with soot-signs or ceremonial burn tracing, and many carry the dry, composed expression of someone who has spent years being taught that emotion is useful only when harnessed. When they cast, flame behaves less like wild fire and more like a disciplined instrument taking instruction from an old doctrine.

These sorcerers are spiritual authorities as much as battlefield casters. They represent the Pyre-Orders' belief that fire is not only destructive, but refining, clarifying, and civilizing. In Limbo, their magic feels especially intrusive: too clean, too confident, too eager to impose shape on a realm that survives by ambiguity. They rarely rant or posture. A Pyre-Order Sorcerer is frightening precisely because they can set a room alight without ever raising their voice above professional disappointment.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Born of Flame**: They possess natural resistance to fire and heat-driven environmental stress.
• **Pyre Sorcery**: Common workings include **Cinder Flicker**, **Shock Pop**, and **Fire Lurch**.
• **Fire Lash**: Their basic offensive casting manifests as a concentrated ribbon of punishing flame.
• **Portal Sensitivity**: Many Pyre-Order Sorcerers are trained to detect instability, weakness, or ritual opportunity in portal architecture.
• **Backline Discipline**: They prefer protected casting

positions and coordinated warfare, not theatrical overextension.

Lava Scout

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Light Spear — 1d10+1

Lava Scouts are rangy, ash-colored, and built for heat country. Their armor is light, their gear compact, and their skin or scale often marked by old burn lines that would cripple softer beings. They wear climbing straps, heat shields, narrow eye-guards, and ration packs full of dried firefruit, mineral salts, and practical little things for surviving where the ground itself has grievances. Their spears are light enough for mobility and vicious enough to discourage pursuit.

Scouts of the Dominion are not loud patriots with banners. They are infiltrators, pathfinders, and heat-route hunters trained to read volcanic terrain with unnerving ease. In Limbo, they tend to feel out of place only in the social sense; physically they adapt to hard environments faster than most locals would like. A Lava Scout creates tension the way a drawn bow does: lean, ready, and clearly capable of going somewhere unpleasant very quickly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Heat Vision:** Lava Scouts gain Advantage when detecting creatures through heat, recent warmth, or volcanic haze.
• **Magma-Footed:** They ignore harm or penalty from naturally hot surfaces that would injure ordinary creatures.
• **Molten Leap:** Once per scene, a Lava Scout may make an extraordinary leap across a gap, hazard, or elevation change up to roughly **20 feet** in favorable conditions.
• **Mobile Skirmisher:** They are built for hit-and-fade tactics, long pursuit, and hostile terrain movement rather than line fighting.
• **Climber's Discipline:** Rough rock, narrow ledge, and heat-riven wall routes rarely slow them as much as they should.

Ashforged Elite

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 2
Attack: Basalt Greatblade — 1d12+2

The Ashforged Elite are what happens when the Dominion decides ordinary intimidation is not sufficient. These officers and elite guards are massive, scale-plated, and burdened in the old honorable way with enough armor, command insignia, and expectation to crush a lesser soldier before battle begins. Their volcanic plate is black, red-veined, and overbuilt to an almost architectural degree. Their two-handed blades look like carved monuments to violence, more basalt and furnace edge than mere steel. Even their silence feels ranked.

An Ashforged Elite is not simply dangerous because of strength. It is dangerous because everyone around it has likely been trained to behave differently in its presence. It commands the field socially before it ever strikes. In Limbo, such figures bring the emotional impact of imperial certainty: the unnerving sense that someone has entered the scene who assumes authority belongs naturally to them and would be happy to prove the point with your ribs.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Stone Plating:** Their armor and scaled resilience grant **AR 2**.
• **Fire Resistance:** Ashforged Elites resist ordinary fire, heat, and most minor flame effects.

• **Crushing Blow**: Once per scene, an Ashforged Elite may commit to a devastating strike. If it succeeds on a **Might** test, its next hit deals **+1d6 damage**. If it fails, the effort leaves it briefly overcommitted, costing it tempo and opening a moment of vulnerability.
• **Command Presence**: Lesser soldiers tend to steady around them, while uncertain foes often feel the pressure of rank before the blade ever lands.
• **Elite Discipline**: They do not break easily, do not retreat lightly, and rarely waste motion.

NPCs of the Velvet Court of Thryx

Court Envoy

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Fae Rapier — 1d6+1

A Court Envoy from Thryx looks less like a visitor and more like a beautifully phrased complication. They are immaculate, graceful, and always dressed with the unnerving precision of someone who considers every fold, jewel, button, veil, scent, and visible color a sentence in an argument already underway. Their features are often delicately unreal: skin with a pearl or violet cast, eyes that hold too much reflected light, hair that behaves like it has private choreography, and a smile that could mean welcome, mockery, sympathy, or contract. Often it means all four.

Envoys are diplomats, manipulators, and social duelists first, combatants second. Their magic is usually inseparable from their manner. Rooms soften or sharpen around them. Emotions skew. Suspicion becomes fascination. They are not necessarily the most physically dangerous beings in Limbo, but they are among the most narratively dangerous. A Court Envoy makes everyone in the scene feel that they are standing in a conversation that may later turn out to have been legally binding.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Glamoured Presence**: Court Envoys gain Advantage on many tests involving persuasion, deception, performance, or graceful manipulation where their glamour can operate.
• **Velvet Tongue**: Once per scene, an Envoy may reroll a failed social test.
• **Elegant Threat**: Even when armed lightly, they make conflict feel socially consequential rather than merely physical.
• **Contract Minded**: They remember promises, turns of phrase, implied consent, and every small opening someone else assumed would be forgotten.
• **Iron Vulnerability**: Like many beings of Thryx, they are ill-at-ease around worked iron and may suffer penalty, pain, or weakened glamour in its close presence.

Velvet Duelist

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 1
Attack: Fae Blade — 1d6+2

Velvet Duelists are beauty sharpened until it becomes rude. They wear light glamour armor, fitted coats, mirror-thread sashes, lacquered boots, and the sort of impossibly balanced blades that seem to have been designed to humiliate opponents aesthetically as well as physically. Their movements are fluid, mocking, and exact. A Duelist in stillness is already performing. A Duelist in motion is often the nearest thing the Court produces to poetry anyone should be allowed to stab with.

In battle, they are predators of poise. They do not simply beat foes; they unsettle them, wrong-foot

them, force them into awkwardness, and make the entire exchange feel as though the victim arrived underdressed. Their emotional effect in a scene is immediate and poisonous: embarrassment mixed with danger, the creeping sense that even your failure is somehow becoming part of their reputation.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Graceful Defense:** Velvet Duelists gain Advantage on dodge, repositioning, or elegant defensive movement.
• **Glamour Feint:** Once per scene, a Duelist may lace a false line of movement with glamour. A foe must test **Awareness** or suffer **–10 Defense** for **1d4 rounds**.
• **Duelist's Tempo:** They excel in one-on-one exchanges, narrow spaces, and any scene where precision matters more than brute force.
• **Courtly Menace:** They often make violence feel like etiquette gone sour, which is unsettling in its own right.
• **Iron Vulnerability:** Worked iron interferes with their glamour and may weaken their confidence, defense, or elegance when pressed close.

Dream-Fae Minstrel

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Echo Harmonics — 1d6 psychic

A Dream-Fae Minstrel seems to have stepped out of a song that should not have been listening. They carry delicate instruments—harps, string frames, prism chimes, hollow flutes, or tone boxes—and wear layered garments full of shimmer, veiling, and impossible color transitions that never quite settle under ordinary light. Their bodies are often slight, luminous, and unnervingly expressive, as if mood touches them faster than flesh. To hear one warming an instrument in a quiet room is to realize that sound can become architecture if given sufficient malice and training.

Minstrels are support figures, distraction artists, emotional saboteurs, and dream-workers with the good manners to make ruin sound lovely first. They are rarely front-rank threats in a brute sense, but they can unmake a scene's emotional stability with alarming speed. Their songs and tones can draw fear upward, multiply sound, pull the mind toward the edge of sleep, or twist a room's sense of itself. Even when not casting, they make people feel observed by music.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Sound-Weaver:** Dream-Fae Minstrels gain Advantage when using music, rhythm, or resonance to distract, unsettle, or emotionally shape a scene.
• **Dreamcraft Performance:** Common workings include **Hall of Echoes** and **Eerie Glance** expressed through music rather than purely spoken or gestured casting.
• **Echo Harmonics:** Their basic attack is a psychic or emotional resonance strike rather than physical harm.
• **Distraction Specialist:** They are especially dangerous in crowded rooms, ritual spaces, dream-thin places, and social scenes where emotion is already unstable.
• **Iron Vulnerability:** Like many Court beings, close iron interferes with their glamour and can make their arts less reliable.

Whisper-Broker

Threat: 1
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Hidden Dagger — 1d4

A Whisper-Broker looks like the sort of person whose sleeves have opinions. They are beautifully dressed, modestly armed, socially smooth, and almost

impossible to catch being surprised. Their clothing tends toward layered silks, hidden seams, concealed sheaths, mood-scented perfumes, and the kind of jewelry that suggests rank while doubling as signal code. Their faces are pleasant in exactly the way a locked box is pleasant: polished, self-contained, and very much not for you.

Whisper-Brokers are spies, fixers, intermediaries, and private merchants in motive rather than goods. They traffic in rumor, blackmail, introductions, contract clauses, hidden longing, and all the softer currencies by which the Velvet Court wages affection and harm. In Limbo, they are dangerous because they can make the local mess legible faster than anyone else in the room. Their emotional effect is less fear than exposure. People around them feel that their secrets have started standing too close to the surface.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Emotion Sense**: A Whisper-Broker can read surface emotional states with unsettling reliability and gains Advantage when exploiting fear, desire, embarrassment, or uncertainty.
• **Secret Broker**: Once per scene, they may automatically uncover one rumor, hidden motive, or private weakness the Creepmaster judges reasonably available in the situation.
• **Illusion Perfume**: Many carry glamour scents or emotional tonics that soften suspicion, sharpen memory, or unsettle targets subtly.
• **Subtle Antagonist**: They are rarely the loudest threat in a scene, but often the one that mattered most afterward.
• **Iron Vulnerability**: Close or deliberate iron contact can disrupt their glamour-supported composure and magical subtlety.

CHAPTER 23: COHORT PLAY RULES

CREEPS! is built first for the classic **One-on-One RPG** shape: one Protagonist, one Creepmaster, and a story that keeps the lantern close to a single life. But Limbo also lends itself naturally to small bands: a patrol of Vigil hopefuls, a salvage crew on the wrong route, a knot of shrine-runners, a half-doomed group of closet-road survivors, or a little company of Creeps who keep each other alive out of loyalty, necessity, or the absence of better options. **Cohort Play** is the optional rules frame for running **CREEPS!** with more than one Protagonist while keeping the same underlying engine: **d100 tests and contests, Advantages and Disadvantages, DoS/DoF, Clocks, Destiny, and strong scene-based consequence**. Nothing here replaces those mechanics. It simply widens the camera.

In Cohort Play, the story becomes less about one singular fate-thread and more about a shared struggle through Limbo's roads, markets, shrines, tunnels, and thresholds. The danger of group play is obvious: the spotlight can sprawl, the loudest player can start steering too much of the story, and scenes can become committee meetings with knives. These rules exist to prevent that. The goal is not to make the game looser. It is to make the group feel like a proper little disaster with structure. One Creep steps forward, the others matter sharply, and the world answers all of them.

Shared Clocks

Cohort Play works best when pressure is tracked through **shared Clocks** rather than through a dozen disconnected little failures. If three Creeps are sneaking through a Lantern Street warehouse, the scene should not collapse into separate spirals every time one roll goes wrong. Instead, failed rolls, partial successes, or ugly costs should often tick a Clock that everyone can see and fear. In **CREEPS!**, common shared Clocks include **Heat** for guards, officials, hostile traders, or Vigil attention; **Supply** for long road travel, bad tunnels, or hungry stretches; **Morale** for frightened followers, hired help, refugees, or nervous companions; **Pursuit** for being tracked through tunnels, closets, ferries, or fungal roads; and **Debt or Obligation** for favors, shrine promises, broker deals, borrowed passage, and all the other little contracts by which Limbo quietly owns people. Shared Clocks keep the whole table pointed at the same danger.

Acting Together

When the Cohort acts, use one of three simple patterns.

Lead + Support is the default. One Protagonist is the clear lead because the approach is singular: one bargain, one leap, one speech, one lock to open, one path to read. The others matter by improving the

lead's position, removing trouble, or containing the fallout if the roll goes badly. This should be the standard shape of most group scenes.

Parallel Actions apply when the Cohort splits tasks toward one shared goal. One Creep distracts the patrol. One works the latch. One watches the alley. One reads the route marks. Everyone acts, but not on the same roll. This is ideal for making the group feel competent without turning every obstacle into a single bottleneck.

Combined Outcome is for moments when everyone is truly doing the same thing: dragging a barricade shut, rowing against blackwater current, hauling survivors from collapse, holding a door while fungus fire spreads nearby. Use this sparingly. If every group problem becomes "everyone roll until success appears," the game loses its teeth.

Shared Spotlight

The most important Cohort rule is **Shared Spotlight**.

In standard one-on-one play, the camera naturally stays tight. In group play, it must be managed on purpose. At the start of each session, or at the start of a major episode if the session is long, establish a simple **Spotlight Order**. Seat order works. A list works. Card draw works. The point is simple: every Protagonist should hold the scene at least once before the session pushes into its climax. A meaningful scene is called a **Beat**. A Beat should carry risk, stakes, and consequence. Something changes because of it.

Each Beat has a **Scene Holder**: the Protagonist currently in focus. That means the main question of the scene belongs to them. Can *they* bluff the broker? Can *they* cross the beam? Can *they* keep the patrol line from breaking? If a decisive roll is needed, it is theirs. If the scene fails, the first and sharpest cost usually lands on them. This preserves the One-on-One feel even in a group. One hero steps up. The dark answers that hero directly.

The other Protagonists still matter. In any Beat, they should usually contribute in one of three ways:

Setup: They earn Advantage, cancel Disadvantage, or otherwise improve the Scene Holder's chance. They identify the watcher in the crowd, get the right tool ready, read the route mark, block the bad angle, or say the right thing before the lead says the wrong one. If the action is risky, roll for it. If it is merely competent preparation, let it stand. A strong Setup usually grants **+10**, cancels an equivalent Disadvantage, or changes the fiction enough that the lead's roll becomes meaningfully better.

Contain: They keep failure from becoming collapse. They steady the witness, hold the line, drag the wounded Creep clear, buy time, keep the cart from overturning, or stop the scene from shattering into worse trouble. If the Scene Holder fails, a strong Contain action may reduce the consequence, prevent an extra Clock tick, preserve key gear, or allow an orderly retreat rather than a disaster.

Pivot: They do not improve the current plan; they create a new option. They notice the second exit, recognize the old shrine mark, catch the ferryman's lie, spot the hidden tunnel, or realize that the thing everyone thought was a wall is actually a sealed closet route. A Pivot does not always grant a numerical bonus. Its value is structural: it changes what the Cohort can choose next.

Spotlight Tokens

For tables that want a clear fairness tool, each Protagonist begins the session with **1 Spotlight Token**. A player may spend it during a Beat, when their support genuinely matters, to do one of the following:

Make it Count: Turn a meaningful Setup into a clear **+10 Advantage** or cancel an equivalent Disadvantage if the fiction supports it.
Hold the Cost: If the Scene Holder fails, take one defined consequence instead: the Heat, the bruise, the public suspicion, the obligation, the recognition, the separation.
Cutaway Reveal: Introduce one small but important truth the scene discovers in the moment: a hidden latch, a familiar insignia, an old route mark, a shrine taboo, a second way out. It must fit the fiction and cannot erase already established facts.

Spotlight Tokens refresh at the start of the next session or major episode. They do **not** replace Destiny. Destiny remains the Protagonist's personal fate-lever, used when *their* moment matters. Spotlight Tokens are ensemble fairness. They make sure support is visible and paid off.

Destiny in Cohort Play

Destiny remains **personal**, not pooled. Each Protagonist holds their own Destiny and spends it on their own decisive moments. This matters. If Destiny becomes communal, the Cohort stops feeling like a knot of desperate individuals and starts feeling like an accounting tool with knives. Let the Scene Holder spend Destiny when they are the one the camera is on. Let supporting characters use Setup, Contain, Pivot, and Spotlight Tokens to keep the whole band from breaking. That balance creates the right rhythm: one bright hero moment, followed by the grim competence of everyone else refusing to let the story end there.

Companions in Cohort Play

Companions should be handled carefully once the cast grows. If every Protagonist has a full Companion, the game can turn into a moving census. In most Cohort Play, use one of three approaches. The cleanest is a **Shared Companion**, one notable supporting figure attached to the whole group. For very small groups, **one Companion per Protagonist** may still work, but that should usually be the upper limit. The simplest method is to treat lesser followers, pets, guards, or shrine aides as **assets rather than full Companions**: they provide situational Advantage, absorb a consequence, carry gear, or help hold a Clock without demanding equal camera time. Companions should still matter, but they should not turn the Cohort into a parade of secondary character management.

Growth in Cohort Play

Cohort Play uses the same **Growth Point** rules as standard play, but the session's total GP should remain stable. More players should not mean faster inflation. At the end of the session, determine the GP total exactly as normal, then distribute it according to **meaningful Beats**. A meaningful Beat is one with real stakes: a declared roll, a real consequence, or an irreversible choice that changes the direction of play. The Scene Holder of such a Beat usually earns the **Primary Share**. A supporting Protagonist whose action clearly changed the outcome earns a **Secondary Share**. A Protagonist who absorbed or carried the major consequence may earn a **Cost Share**. Keep the total within the normal session GP award. This keeps advancement fair without turning spotlight procedure into a point farm.

Final Guidance for the Creepmaster

Cohort Play works best when each Beat has a clear question, a clear Scene Holder, and at least two obvious hooks for the rest of the group. Do not frame scenes as "everyone talks until something happens." Frame them as: *Can Nib get the ferryman to agree? Can Bristle keep the crowd from turning? Can Morrow tell whether the route is wrong?* The Cohort should feel like a little band of specialists and survivors, not a rules committee trapped in a fungus cellar.

In short: keep the camera moving, keep the stakes personal, keep the Clocks visible, and let one Creep step forward at a time while the others do the hard work of making that step survivable. That is Cohort Play in **CREEPS!**—a handful of Protagonists sharing one bad road and somehow becoming harder to kill because they are making each other matter.

BONUS Table(s)!

CREEP COHORT MISSION GENERATOR

Roll to instantly assemble Vigil assignments, emergencies, investigations, or portal disturbances.

This system contains 7 tables:

1. **Mission Category (1d20)**
2. **Primary Objective (1d20)**
3. **Complication (1d20)**
4. **Opposition / Enemy Presence (1d20)**
5. **Region Assignment (1d10)**
6. **Employer / Requesting Party (1d12)**
7. **Mission Twist (1d20)**

You can roll any number of tables depending on how complex you want the mission to be.

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1. MISSION CATEGORY (1d20)

What type of mission is the Vigil dispatching your Cohort on?

d20	Mission Type
1	Trespasser Investigation
2	Invader Response
3	Truant Recovery (Limbo Citizen)
4	Portal Stabilization
5	Portal Shutdown
6	Portal Construction Assistance
7	Missing Creep Search
8	Diplomatic Escort
9	Monster Hunt
10	Supply Retrieval
11	Lost Item Recovery
12	Human Child Rescue
13	Human Adult Retrieval
14	Criminal Pursuit
15	Corpse Recovery (very grim)
16	Fungus Forest Harvest Run
17	Arcane Artifact Containment
18	Bad Dream Quarantine
19	Patrol of Known Dangerous Area
20	Emergency Response (GM's choice of major threat)

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2. PRIMARY OBJECTIVE (1d20)

What exactly must the Cohort achieve?

d20	Objective
1	Capture the target alive
2	Repel or defeat the threat
3	Locate missing person/creature
4	Secure the portal for inspection
5	Neutralize portal instability
6	Retrieve magical component
7	Deliver message to entity/faction
8	Record data for Scryer analysis
9	Guard location for 1d6 hours
10	Establish temporary outpost
11	Scout area and report back
12	Evacuate civilians
13	Remove illegal portal blockers
14	Track creature through 2+ regions
15	Bind dangerous beast
16	Escort important visitor safely
17	Destroy stolen magical artifact
18	Recover body for ritual burial
19	Test new Vigil device in the field
20	Survive and escape a collapsing region

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3. COMPLICATION TABLE (1d20)

What makes the mission harder?

d20	Complication
1	Portal fluctuations every 1d6 rounds
2	Local fauna becomes hostile
3	A second faction wants the same target
4	Magical darkness reduces visibility
5	Passage walls shift unpredictably
6	Creep Cohort is being watched
7	Time-pressure — must finish under 30 minutes
8	Misleading directions from locals
9	Opponents use stealth and hit-and-run tactics
10	Storm surge: wind, shadows, and echoes
11	Fungal spores create hallucinations
12	Cohort is down a member (injured, sick)
13	Portaled region shifts climates dramatically
14	Magical silence zone — no verbal spells
15	Rival Creep Cohort interfering
16	Unexpected human arrives through portal
17	Enemy can teleport or phase through walls
18	Target panics and flees deeper into Limbo
19	Something follows the Cohort back to HQ
20	Hidden boss-level threat awakens

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4. OPPOSITION / ENEMY PRESENCE (1d20)

What kind of opposition stands in the way?

d20	Enemy Type
1	Goblin thieves
2	Imp prankers
3	Kobold trap layers
4	Human Police Officer confused and armed
5	Troll hunting party
6	Giant Boar
7	Wraith
8	Rakshasa manipulator
9	Thorn-Goblins
10	Dark Servitor squad
11	Manticore
12	Griffon protecting nest
13	Hydra
14	Brain Flayer scouting
15	Beholder tyrant
16	Night Terror presence
17	Aether Leech cluster
18	Gloam-Born strike team
19	Elemental collapse event
20	Elder Dragon watching from above

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5. REGION ASSIGNMENT (1d10)

Where does the mission occur?

d10	Region
1	Great Cavern
2	Shadowed Tunnels
3	Fungal Forests
4	Deep Liminal Zones
5	Slimestone Mines
6	The Whispering Corridors
7	The Flooded Archways
8	The Old Vigil Barracks
9	Merchant Warrens
10	The Rift-Scar (unstable astral boundary)

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6. REQUESTING PARTY (1d12)

Who sent for the Cohort?

d12	Requestor
1	Vigil Commander
2	Local Tunnel Watch
3	Portal Engineer's Guild
4	Enchanter College
5	Limbo Artificer Hall

d12	Requestor
6	Night Schooler Dean
7	Merchant Caravan
8	Scryer of Limbo
9	Human Child through closet portal
10	Human Adult (scared, confused)
11	Ambassador from a Visiting Culture
12	Unknown voice echoing through portal...

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7. MISSION TWIST (1d20)

Something unexpected occurs mid-mission.

d20	Twist
1	Mission target is friendly, not hostile
2	Target is a decoy — real one is deeper inside
3	Portal closes behind the Cohort
4	A second portal opens during investigation
5	Someone betrays the Cohort
6	Human arrives mid-mission needing rescue
7	Enemy is possessed or mind-controlled
8	False alarm — but something else is wrong
9	Region changes physically during mission
10	A Creep NPC helper joins (GM chooses)
11	Time dilation — 1 minute = 1 hour outside
12	Fae bargain opportunity (dangerous)
13	Magic goes unstable (all spell casting -20)
14	Magical silence falls (no verbal spells)
15	Lights go out completely (Stealth +20 for foes)
16	Target is fleeing from a bigger threat
17	Cohort receives a prophetic warning
18	Earth tremor collapses part of the area
19	Boss creature emerges from portal
20	Mission was a setup — trap springs

QUICK MISSION GENERATION EXAMPLES

Example A — Simple Assignment

- Category: 4 (Portal Stabilization)
- Objective: 11 (Scout and report back)
- Complication: 5 (Shifting walls)
- Opposition: 9 (Thorn-Goblins)
- Region: 2 (Shadowed Tunnels)

→ **Mission:**
"Stabilize a flickering portal in the Shadowed Tunnels. Scout the walls and report back. Beware: the tunnels are shifting unpredictably and Thorn-Goblins have taken interest in the anomaly."

Example B — Complex Adventure Seed

- Category: 1 (Trespasser Investigation)
- Objective: 3 (Find missing person)
- Complication: 16 (Unexpected human arrival)
- Opposition: 17 (Aether Leeches)
- Region: 9 (Merchant Warrens)
- Requestor: 9 (Human child)
- Twist: 20 (It's a trap)

→ **Mission:**
"A frightened human child reports a missing sibling through a closet portal. The Cohort tracks the trail to the Merchant Warrens, but Aether Leeches infest the area. A human adult appears unexpectedly... and the entire situation is a trap set by an unknown entity."

CHAPTER 24: THE HUMAN WORLD & ITS SECRET CONNECTIONS

THE HUMAN WORLD

Its history, interactions with Creeps, and the nature of unseen portals

The Human World—vast, bright, loud, wildly unpredictable—is a place Creeps know well but visit rarely. While Limbo is a pocket-realm bound to the Astral Plane, the Human World exists on the Material Layer, rich with life, history, dreams, and constant emotional currents.

To Creeps, humans are curious creatures: fragile, unaware, and full of imagination so volatile it can bend the thinner edges of portal-reality.

Yet despite this deep connection, the two worlds remain mostly unaware of each other—by design and by natural law.

THE HUMAN WORLD ACCORDING TO CREEPS

Creeps know the Human World primarily through:

- **bedroom closets**
- **attics**
- **old basements**
- **crawlspaces**
- **under-bed hollows**
- **abandoned structures**
- **wardrobes, cupboards, pantries**
- **secret doors humans forget they built**

These spaces naturally gather **emotional residue** and **dream weight**, which makes them perfect anchors for Limbo's portals.

From Limbo's perspective:

- Humans radiate dream-energy even when awake.
- Their emotions cause "echo waves" that can destabilize weak portals.
- Children produce the strongest astral resonance.
- Adults dull over time, having lost "the Sight" unless exceptionally imaginative, traumatized, magically gifted, or given explicit permission by a Creep.

Because of this, Creeps view the Human World as a place of **wild, unpredictable weather**, not of climate, but of **emotional pressure**.

Storms of fear, excitement, grief, or joy can ripple through Limbo like shockwaves.

HUMAN PERCEPTION OF CREEPS

"Only children can see a Creep unless given permission by the Creep, or through magic."

This is one of the oldest laws binding the two worlds.

Creep Visibility Rules:

1. **Children naturally see Creeps.**
   Their minds are still flexible enough to register astral phenomena.
2. **Adults cannot see Creeps** unless:
   - A Creep intentionally grants permission
   - The adult undergoes a magical event
   - A spell, curse, or artifact allows perception
   - They stand inside certain dream thresholds
   - They are under the influence of strong emotions (rare)
3. **Animals can sense Creeps** but perceive them in instinctive ways:
   - Cats stare at them
   - Dogs bark or avoid rooms
   - Birds imitate their chatter
   - Small pets follow them with their eyes
4. **Magically awakened adults** who see or interact with Creeps become subjects of Vigil Review, as prolonged contact can expose Limbo.

Why children can see Creeps:

Creeps exist partially in the **Astral–Dream layer**, and children possess minds that straddle dream and waking life easily. Their imaginations are "permeable," allowing them to perceive what adults rationalize away.

As adults grow, their dreams become narrower, less vivid, more abstract—closing the astral perception channels unless reopened by unusual events.

RECORDED HUMAN–CREEP INTERACTIONS

From Vigil archives, Scryer journals & firsthand Cohort reports

The Vigil maintains an extensive archive of interactions, divided into three eras:

The Early Contact Era (Before Formal Records)

These stories survive only as myths and folklore.

Human legends hint at early interactions:

- "house brownies"
- "closet goblins"
- "mushroom folk"
- "night guardians"
- "the small people"
- "spirits under the bed"

These ancient tales often depict helpful, mischievous, or protective beings—almost certainly Creeps interacting freely before the modern ruleset was established.

The Vigil believes portals were once far more chaotic, and that early humans regularly saw Creeps until emotional pressure stabilized and the Sight faded.

The Hidden Era (Rise of Human Understanding)

Creeps became mistaken for:

- imaginary friends
- ghosts
- minor monsters
- hallucinations of children
- Trickster spirits in European, African, and Asian folklore
- protective ancestors

Creeps themselves rarely caused harm—most interactions were accidental or the result of Truant activity.

The Vigil formally restricted portal use after several:

- accidental invasions of small human homes
- cases of children following Creeps *into* Limbo
- magical flare-ups caused by childish imagination

This era solidified the law:

> **"Never let an untrained human cross a portal unless in life-threatening emergency."**

The Modern Era (Present Day)

Human technology has changed the way portals behave.
Electronics, LED lights, and certain metal alloys react strangely to portal boundaries, causing:

- flickering lights
- electromagnetic "hums"
- cold spots
- anxiety spikes
- disappearing small objects
- dream disturbances

Cohorts visiting the Human World must be careful—modern homes are full of sensors that *almost* detect them, creating anomalies in recorded security footage.

Typical modern interactions:

- small children laughing at unseen visitors
- toddlers pointing at empty corners
- parents losing keys (due to minor fey trespassers)
- pets reacting aggressively or affectionately to nothing
- sleepwalking episodes aligning with portal activity

Creeps strive to maintain secrecy, but the Human World's emotional weight is stronger now than ever.

HUMAN WORLD DANGERS (TO CREEPS)

Despite appearing mundane, the Human World is very dangerous to Creeps:

1. **Bright artificial lights** can distort Creep shapes.
2. **Human emotional surges** (arguments, fear, grief) cause astral turbulence.
3. **Steel** and man-made metal alloys interfere with portal reentry.
4. **Large crowds** produce overwhelming psychic noise.
5. **Human belief systems** (religious, superstitious, or skeptical) affect Creep manifestation.

6. **Electronic surveillance** risks exposing Limbo.

Creeps must operate carefully and quickly.

HOW HUMANS PERCEIVE PORTAL EVENTS

To adults:

- Sudden cold draft
- Door creaks with no source
- Missing items
- Lights flickering
- Kids waking from vivid dreams
- Pets staring at walls
- Feelings of being watched
- "Old house noises"

To children:

- They see Creeps clearly
- They remember them as friends or monsters
- Often assume they're imaginary playmates
- Some draw them
- Some try to follow them

To magical humans:

- Portals appear as shimmering thresholds
- Strange sounds echo during dream sleep
- Mild psychic impressions
- Visions or symbolic dreams

To sensitive adults:

- A vague sense of wrongness or curiosity
- Goosebumps
- Déjà vu
- Nightmares matching Limbo creatures

The Vigil monitors homes with high-emotional flux to prevent breaches.

HISTORICAL EVENTS OF HUMAN-LIMBO CONTACT

The Fading of the Sight

Human children lost much of their natural astral perception around the rise of modern rational thinking. Only small pockets remain sensitive.

The "Great Closet Surge" (1894)

An explosion of childhood fear-related energy caused every closet portal in Europe to activate simultaneously, overwhelming the Vigil for months.

The Silent Decade (1930–1940)

Portal activity slowed, possibly due to mass depression and global unrest dampening dream energies. Few Trespassers recorded.

The Neon Wake (1980s)

Electronic noise began interacting with portals. Creeps reported:

- oscillating doorframes
- static sparks
- neon-induced hallucinations

The Present Age

Constant emotional overload means portals are **more unstable but easier to track**, as humans produce stronger dream emissions than ever.

KNOWN HUMAN ENTITIES

Most humans never truly see Creeps.

They notice movement at the edge of a hallway, feel watched near a closet door, hear a soft footstep in the wrong room, or wake with the stubborn conviction that someone small and serious was standing beside the bed a moment before. Then morning arrives, reason does what reason does, and the whole thing is packed away under imagination, fatigue, stress, or the general indignity of being a human adult.

Children are different. Children see. Children hear. Children dream loudly enough to disturb architecture. They notice Creeps naturally unless something actively suppresses that sight. Adults are harder cases. Most require permission, magic, contamination, repeated proximity, or some accident of fate to perceive Limbo's little citizens clearly. A rarer few become Awakened by occult study, astral exposure, artifact contact, or plain bad luck wearing a mystical hat.

The individuals below are not "monsters" in the Bestiary sense. They are human-side people of note: witnesses, neighbors, possible allies, recurring complications, and sometimes the fragile center of an entire mission. Some may need help. Some may become threats without meaning to. Some may serve as temporary Companions or scenario anchors in the Human World. All of them matter because the boundary between Limbo and the Human World is not just made of portals. It is made of people.

These entries are written in a hybrid format: rich enough to function as setting-facing chapter material, but structured enough to support play when one of these humans becomes central to a scene, mission, or relationship.

Children (Innate Sighted)

Children naturally perceive Creeps unless that sight has been magically muffled, damaged, or forcibly sealed. That alone makes them among the most important human-side presences in the setting. Some are merely witnesses. Others become anchors, warning systems, accidental guides, or the human emotional center around which whole portal incidents begin to spin.

Emma Carroway

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: None, though emotional outbursts may trigger local astral disturbance

Emma Carroway is seven years old and looks, at first glance, exactly like the sort of child adults underestimate into catastrophe. She is quiet, slight, and often found half-curled into window seats, closets, blanket forts, or the sort of small domestic corners where dreams seem to collect. She has soft features, watchful eyes, and a drifting, absent-minded habit of looking not at the room itself but just slightly through it, as though checking whether it is behaving properly. Her hair is usually untidy, her hands are often marked with colored pencil, and her notebooks and sketch pads are full of drawings no one in the Human World should be able to produce with such anatomical confidence.

Emma matters because her dreams hit Limbo like weather.

The closet portal in her suburban home is unstable even by Closetways standards, and Emma's sleeping mind seems to strengthen or weaken it according to emotional pressure, dream intensity, and occasionally

factors no one has yet mapped cleanly. Cohorts assigned to her house do not merely "watch a child." They monitor a recurring local condition of reality. Night-Between intrusions, low-level dream bleed, astral eddies, and opportunistic Trespassers all show unusual interest in her room. She is not consciously summoning them, but the effect amounts to something disturbingly close.

Emma's emotional impact in a scene is often subtle and sad. She is not theatrical. She is the kind of child who asks softly accurate questions and then goes quiet when adults answer badly. Creeps who interact with her often come away feeling protective, unsettled, or both. She does not panic easily, but her fear matters when it arrives. A frightened Emma can worsen portal instability faster than a grown occultist with a ritual kit and poor judgment.

Likely Skills: Awareness, Dreamcraft sensitivity, Drawing, Quiet Observation
Traits & Abilities:
• **Innate Sight**: Emma sees Creeps naturally and rarely mistakes them for "imaginary friends" unless pressured by adults to do so.
• **Astral Dream Surge**: During sleep, strong emotional dreams may strengthen, weaken, or distort a nearby portal. The Creepmaster may use this to advance or reduce a relevant Clock.
• **Exact Sketches**: Emma's drawings sometimes reproduce exact Kin traits, local portal geometry, or creatures she should not know. Her sketches may grant **+10** to investigation, identification, or route interpretation when studied carefully.
• **Quiet Child Presence**: Adults tend to underestimate how much she has noticed. This is often a mistake.

Companion Use: Emma is not a field Companion in the ordinary sense, but she can serve as a stationary anchor, witness, emotional core, and source of dream-clues in Human World missions.

Nathaniel "Nate" Hollow

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Wild Swing, Thrown Tool, or Stick — 1d4

Nate Hollow is ten years old, farm-raised, sun-browned, and possessed of the specific kind of reckless courage that makes adults say "spirited" when they mean "will absolutely open the wrong door twice." He is all scraped knees, quick hands, stubborn jaw, and the complete conviction that if something scared him yesterday, it probably deserves confronting today with a flashlight and inadequate planning. His hair is usually wind-tossed, his clothes are practical and muddy, and he moves through his family's old farmhouse as though he has signed some private treaty with every unstable floorboard in it.

That farmhouse contains five unused room doors. Three of them are portals.

This has made Nate one of the most troublesome and useful child entities in current Vigil-adjacent memory. He has already befriended a Truant Creep and treats much of the supernatural traffic in his house with an attitude halfway between neighborhood loyalty and amateur border management. Unfortunately, he also lives in what amounts to a Trespasser hotbed, and his bravery routinely outruns his caution. Nate does not merely witness weirdness. He tries to help it, hide it, protect it, question it, and occasionally feed it sandwiches.

Psychologically, Nate has the dangerous quality of adapting too well. He is less frightened by portal events than he should be, which makes him valuable in crises and terrifying in quieter long-term ways. He has seen edges of Limbo during sleepwalking episodes, and some part of him seems to retain that geography

instinctively. He does not yet understand what he knows, but he often chooses the right wrong hallway under pressure.

Likely Skills: Athletics, Awareness, Sneaking, Improvised Courage, Animal Handling, Farm Competence

Traits & Abilities:

- **Innate Sight**: Nate sees Creeps naturally and recognizes repeat visitors easily.
- **Portal House Survivor**: He gains Advantage on tests involving movement, hiding, or route improvisation within his own home and immediate property.
- **Sleepwalker's Edge**: During or after strange sleep episodes, Nate may recall details of Limbo-adjacent space no ordinary child should know.
- **Loyal to the Wrong Things**: If a Creep has earned his trust, Nate may hide it from adults, patrols, or obvious good sense.
- **Reckless Intervention**: Nate is likely to step into danger for a friend, especially if he thinks adults are about to mishandle the situation.

Companion Use: Nate can function as a temporary Human World Companion for farmhouse, rural, or portal-house missions, especially where courage and local knowledge matter more than prudence.

Peni Alvarez

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: None

Peni Alvarez is six, small, sharply expressive, and speaks with the alarming precision of someone who has not yet learned that many adults prefer children to be vague. She lives in a busy apartment building full of sound, smells, neighbors, doors, pipes, arguments, laughter, and exactly the sort of layered human life in which Creeps can hide for a long time if they are clever. Peni's dark eyes are bright and direct, and she has a habit of tilting her head slightly before answering questions, as though first consulting information no one else in the room received.

Peni is one of the rare children who can reliably **hear** Creeps even when sight is disrupted, blocked, or otherwise compromised. More unusually, she claims she can smell portals. She uses language like "rain inside the wall," "burnt blanket," "silver closet air," and "old cold pennies," all of which sound ridiculous until she proves right again. For Cohorts operating in crowded residential environments, Peni can be more useful than specialized gear and much harder to convince to take a nap.

Her emotional effect in play is often one of unnerving competence hidden inside a child's ordinary life. She is curious rather than dreamy, articulate rather than mystical, and often asks practical follow-up questions no one enjoys hearing from someone still small enough to need help reaching the sink. Creeps who work around her often find her either delightful or deeply unsettling, sometimes in the same minute.

Likely Skills: Awareness, Listening, Social Reading, Curiosity, Verbal Precision

Traits & Abilities:

- **Innate Hearing**: Peni may detect Creeps, portal residue, hidden movement, or whispered non-human activity even when she cannot see the source clearly.
- **Portal Scent**: She often identifies nearby thresholds, active closetways, or recent passage residue before trained adults do.
- **Apartment Child**: She is comfortable in dense multi-family environments and knows how to move through them quickly and quietly for her age.
- **Asks the Right Wrong Question**: Peni often notices contradictions in adult explanations, especially where the supernatural has begun leaking into ordinary life.

Companion Use: Peni works well as a witness-guide, neighborhood sensor, or clue-bearing child in apartment, urban, or densely populated Human World scenarios.

Oliver Briggs

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: None

Oliver Briggs is four years old, bright-faced, open-hearted, and not remotely equipped for the sort of setting relevance he already possesses. He lives in a townhome with a newly awakened attic portal, which would already be enough trouble even if Oliver did not respond to Creeps with delighted laughter loud enough to alert every adult in the building. He has round features, quick little hands, and the deeply hazardous cheerfulness of a child who has not yet learned that not everything smiling back deserves trust.

Oliver matters because he is almost impossible to fool emotionally. He may not understand what he sees, but he reacts to it instantly and sincerely. If a Creep enters the room, he laughs, points, talks, or toddles directly toward the problem. This makes him both a warning system and a walking escalation event. He has already once followed a Creep halfway into Limbo before being recovered, which has made every responsible entity attached to his case visibly older.

His emotional presence is not eerie so much as nerve-fraying. Everyone around him feels one bad moment away from disaster, because he is exactly young enough to turn supernatural proximity into physical action without consulting self-preservation. He is not gifted in the way Emma is, or tuned like Peni, or bold like Nate. He is simply open, and that openness is dangerous near thresholds.

Likely Skills: None in a formal sense; toddler movement, trust, and accidental escalation
Traits & Abilities:
- **Innate Sight**: Oliver sees Creeps naturally and reacts to them with immediate joy or curiosity.
- **Portal Wanderer**: He is highly likely to move toward open thresholds, visible Creeps, and strange sounds unless actively watched.
- **Alerting Laughter**: His reactions may immediately compromise stealth or secrecy in a scene.
- **Toddler Gravity**: Any mission involving Oliver should treat basic child safety as an active hazard.

Companion Use: Oliver is best used as a rescue target, living alarm, emotional liability, or catalyst for attic/household threshold scenarios rather than a sustained Companion.

Adults with Conditional Sight

Most adults in the Human World cannot see Creeps at all unless a Creep grants permission, a magical event alters perception, or some artifact, ritual, or sustained contamination shifts the boundary. These adults are important precisely because they stand near the edge of awareness. They notice patterns, react to residue, and become recurring witnesses, allies, liabilities, or accidental investigators.

Dr. Marlene Cotton

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: None in ordinary combat; may verbally stabilize, de-escalate, or diagnose

Dr. Marlene Cotton is a forty-four-year-old child psychologist with thoughtful eyes, practical clothes, careful posture, and the unmistakable air of a woman

who has spent years listening to children say impossible things and learning not to dismiss them too quickly. She is not glamorous. She is steady. Her office is soft-lit, orderly, and full of drawings, toys, sensory tools, low shelves, and the kind of deliberate gentleness that can make a room feel safer before anyone says why.

Marlene matters because she has become a quiet archive of Creep-adjacent testimony without ever being told that is what she is collecting. She has treated dozens, perhaps hundreds, of "imaginary friend" cases, closet fears, sleep-disturbance episodes, drawing compulsions, and portal-side anxieties that align much too cleanly with real Limbo patterns. She is overly logical in the way some compassionate professionals become logical: not because she lacks imagination, but because she is trying very hard not to let frightened families drown in nonsense. Certain Creeps trust her enough to grant her temporary Sight during sensitive cases, and when they do, she adapts faster than most adults because some part of her had already prepared the room for impossible children.

Her emotional impact is stabilizing. In a setting full of panic, secrecy, and supernatural overreaction, Dr. Cotton represents calm adult competence. That makes her precious—and vulnerable.

Likely Skills: Medicine (psychological care), Persuasion, Insight, Observation, Human Behavior, Quiet Authority

Traits & Abilities:

- **Pattern Recognition**: Marlene gains Advantage when comparing children's accounts, drawings, recurring fears, or behavioral symptoms across multiple cases.
- **Trusted by the Frightened**: Children, stressed parents, and shaken adults often calm more quickly in her presence.
- **Conditional Sight**: If granted permission by a Creep or exposed to a strong event, she can retain accurate memory of what she sees.
- **Grounding Presence**: Once per scene, she may help a panicked human settle enough to remove a minor fear or shock-based penalty.

Companion Use: Dr. Cotton makes an excellent Human World Companion in investigations involving children, trauma, recurring portal stress, or household cases where emotional care matters as much as tactical competence.

Theodore Brand ("Mr. Brand")

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Heavy Hammer, Pry Bar, or Carpenter's Tool — 1d6

Theodore Brand is sixty-two, retired, broad-handed, and built with the slow durable solidity of a man who spent most of his life making structures stand where people told him they wanted them. He has silvered hair, patient eyes, old work shoulders, and a permanent smell of sawdust, linseed, iron, and memory. Even now, long retired, he carries himself like a carpenter: measuring first, moving only when the movement is worth doing.

Mr. Brand matters because he unknowingly built several permanent portal anchors.

Over decades of work, he developed habits of proportion, framing, threshold placement, closet depth, attic access, and door alignment that repeatedly produced structures favorable to stable crossings. He does not know the full truth, but he knows enough to be unsettled by the old whispers, taps, temperature shifts, and odd recurring

disturbances in homes he constructed. He still keeps many of the tools used in those builds, some of which have become symbolically resonant from years of accidental portal shaping.

His emotional presence is quietly haunting. He is not a mystic. He is an honest tradesman who has begun to suspect that his life's work has been conversing with the unseen without his informed consent. That kind of realization creates a very particular sadness and dignity.

Likely Skills: Carpentry, Architecture Sense, Awareness, Endurance, Repair, Practical Strength
Traits & Abilities:
• **Threshold Instinct**: Theodore gains Advantage when examining doors, closets, framing, hidden spaces, warped thresholds, or houses behaving strangely.
• **Old Builder's Eye**: He notices structural anomalies others miss, especially in domestic architecture.
• **Portal-Shaped Tools**: Certain old tools in his possession may resonate near portal clusters, hidden anchors, or weak thresholds.
• **Steady Hands**: He is useful in repair, barricading, improvised access, and careful physical problem-solving under pressure.

Companion Use: Mr. Brand is ideal for house investigations, old neighborhood portal clusters, structural breaches, and scenarios involving domestic architecture or anchor repair.

Kisha Danvers

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Improvised Strike or Camera Tripod — 1d4

Kisha Danvers is thirty-one, sharp-featured, sharp-eyed, and gives off the perpetual low electrical charge of someone who has not slept quite enough because the world is finally becoming interesting in exactly the wrong way. A freelance videographer by trade, she dresses for movement, urban access, and equipment management: layered jackets, practical boots, headset cords, sling bags, memory cases, spare batteries, and the controlled impatience of a person who expects reality to waste her time and wants footage to prove it.

Kisha matters because she keeps capturing portal residue on camera.

Not clearly. Not cleanly. Not usefully enough to convince the world. But enough. Flickers, silhouettes, warped light, vanished figures, doorframe distortions, afterimages, and one infamous moment in which a full Creep silhouette appeared on a recording moments before the camera burned out permanently. She thinks she is discovering ghosts, cover-ups, or a pattern of urban haunting. She is wrong in the specifics and dangerously right in the broad shape of her suspicion.

Her emotional effect on play is acceleration. Kisha is exactly the kind of human who can turn a quiet threshold situation into a public problem with one upload, one bad livestream, one stubborn trip back to the site, or one dangerous act of editing. She is not malicious. She is investigative, driven, and increasingly unwilling to let normal explanations bully her out of what she has already seen.

Likely Skills: Awareness, Technology, Investigation, Stealth, Streetwise, Persistence
Traits & Abilities:
• **Residue Capture**: Kisha's gear occasionally records portal distortion, shadow-imprint, or glamour failure that the naked eye misses.
• **Obsessive Follow-Up**: Once interested in a site, she is hard to redirect without strong evidence or direct intervention.
• **Tech-Savvy**: She can place cameras, review angles,

trace movement patterns, and turn one stray visual anomaly into a working theory.
• **Conditional Contact**: Strong events may give her brief or partial perception of Creeps, especially through screens, lenses, or glitching recordings.

Companion Use: Kisha works well as an investigator-ally, human-side witness, media complication, or temporary mission Companion in urban and abandoned-site stories.

Deputy Sheriff Layton Moss

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Service Revolver — 1d8, or Baton — 1d6

Layton Moss is thirty-nine, broad-shouldered, careful-eyed, and carries the tired grounded alertness common to local law enforcement who have seen enough genuine human ugliness to distrust theatrical explanations. He keeps his hair short, his uniform neat, and his expression somewhere between skepticism and concern most of the time. He is protective by instinct, observant by training, and increasingly irritated by the fact that abandoned locations in his jurisdiction keep producing calls that do not fit any explanation he can file without sounding concussed.

Layton matters because he keeps arriving where portals are active.

He does not know he is tracking Limbo-side patterns, but the pattern is tracking him back. Missing-persons calls, break-ins, strange noises, weird lights, impossible rescue situations, and repeat disturbance zones all keep pulling him toward sites the Vigil would prefer to handle without municipal paperwork. He suspects cult activity, staged pranks, trafficking, or organized trespass. He is wrong, but not absurdly so. In one rescue mission, a Creep touched his shoulder and unknowingly granted a flicker of sight-memory. Since then, he has become just a little too good at standing in exactly the wrong room at the right time.

His emotional effect is pressure. Deputy Moss makes scenes feel official, grounded, and harder to explain away. He is the Human World arriving with a badge and lawful concern.

Likely Skills: Firearms, Awareness, Athletics, Command, Investigation, Endurance
Traits & Abilities:
• **Protective Instinct**: Layton will move toward civilians, children, or obvious casualties before securing his own comfort.
• **Scene Reader**: He gains Advantage in rescue scenes, abandoned structures, and crisis-response environments where practical danger matters more than occult theory.
• **Conditional Brush with Sight**: Very strong events, direct permission, or repeated exposure may let him perceive more than he should for brief moments.
• **Lawful Pressure**: His presence can complicate stealth, concealment, and cleanup operations, but may also stabilize frightened humans quickly.

Companion Use: Layton can serve as a rescue-oriented Companion, reluctant ally, or escalating law-pressure figure in rural, suburban, and abandoned-site missions.

Magical or Awakened Humans

These humans are rare and structurally dangerous to the secrecy of the setting. They can perceive or affect Creeps because of magic, astral exposure, artifact contact, occult study, or other awakening circumstances. Some are useful allies. Some are

unstable liabilities. Most are both, depending on the week.

Mira Latchfield

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Ritual Mirror Shard or Utility Blade — 1d4

Mira Latchfield is twenty-eight, a librarian by profession and an occult researcher by terrible career drift. She is pale from indoor scholarship, sparely dressed, soft-spoken, and visibly built for concentration rather than combat. Her hair is usually tied back in ways that suggest practical neglect, her sleeves often hold dust or ink, and she carries notebooks, copied fragments, and wrapped reflective tools with the tender caution of someone who knows they have already opened one intellectual door too many.

Mira matters because she found a grimoire that referenced Limbo and believed it.

Through ritual reading, mirror study, and sheer dangerous curiosity, she accidentally attuned herself to astral fluctuations. She can now see Creeps clearly—but only in reflective surfaces. Mirrors, dark windows, polished silver, water basins, camera lenses, and glossy glass all become possible points of sight. This makes her one of the setting's most useful and unnerving Awakened humans. She is never entirely looking at you directly, and yet she may see you more clearly than anyone else in the room.

Her emotional impact is one of fragile intelligence under strain. She is not a swaggering occultist. She is a person who read too deeply and kept going anyway. The cost of that choice is beginning to show.

Likely Skills: Lore, Research, Dreamcraft sensitivity, Occult Study, Awareness, Careful Observation
Traits & Abilities:
• **Reflective Sight**: Mira can perceive Creeps, thresholds, or astral disturbance clearly through reflective surfaces.
• **Occult Scholarship**: She gains Advantage when interpreting written ritual material, historical references, symbolic geometry, or old portal notes.
• **Overexposed Mind**: Strong occult scenes may tire, disturb, or overwhelm her more quickly than mundane ones would.
• **Library Habits**: She excels in quiet, archive, document, and controlled study environments.

Companion Use: Mira is a strong Companion for research-heavy stories, occult archives, mirror-ritual episodes, and any mission where knowledge matters more than speed.

Avery Kuno

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: None, though astral surge may have side effects

Avery Kuno is seventeen, narrow-shouldered, exhausted-looking, and trapped in the social misery of being old enough to know something is badly wrong and young enough that adults still prefer easier explanations. Their clothes are ordinary student layers, their sleep schedule is wrecked, and their face often carries the distracted strain of someone who has returned from somewhere else and is trying to remember how chairs work. Avery is nervous, excitable, and often visibly embarrassed by the scale of their own experiences.

They matter because they project into the Astral in their sleep.

Not metaphorically. Not in a "vivid dreams" way. Their astral form has been seen by multiple Cohorts wandering near portals, liminal edges, and fringe-thin routes during sleep episodes. Worse, they may involuntarily stabilize certain portals simply by being nearby in the right state. This makes them a powerful asset, a dangerous beacon, and exactly the sort of teenager no responsible occult system wants unsupervised near old doors.

Emotionally, Avery brings pathos and volatility. They are frightened, lonely, often disbelieved, and full of accidental importance. The wrong faction could use them. The wrong Creep could scare them into disaster. The right Cohort might keep them alive and sane.

Likely Skills: Insight, Dreamcraft sensitivity, Awareness, Fragile Composure
Traits & Abilities:
• **Astral Projection**: During sleep or extreme exhaustion, Avery's astral self may appear near portals or liminal regions.
• **Unstable Stabilizer**: Avery may accidentally calm, hold, or distort a portal condition depending on the scene.
• **Threshold Draw**: Sensitive entities may notice Avery before Avery notices them.
• **Exhausted Teen**: Social and emotional pressure affect them strongly; support matters.

Companion Use: Avery is excellent as a fragile but high-value Companion in portal stories, Dreamcraft missions, and fringe-threshold adventures.

Mr. Ishaan Patel

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Cane, Paperweight, or Hidden Blade — 1d4

Ishaan Patel is fifty-two, elegant without ostentation, and runs his antique business with the immaculate courtesy of a man who has learned that good manners make people underestimate how much he notices. He dresses in careful tailored layers, keeps his shop ordered without making it sterile, and handles old objects with that rare combination of respect and proprietorial confidence that marks someone who truly loves things with history. His voice is calm, his smile measured, and his eyes sharper than most customers deserve.

He matters because he owns a surprising number of lost Limbo objects.

Some were acquired honestly through estate channels, private sales, or old collections. Others passed through enough hands that honesty became difficult to prove. Ishaan cannot see Creeps naturally all the time, but he senses the "warmth" of certain objects and possesses one talisman that grants him brief periods of Sight. He knows more than he says, less than he fears, and exactly enough to become central to any story involving displaced artifacts, Truant losses, or old portal debris in the Human World.

His emotional effect is slow pressure. Scenes around him often become quieter, sharper, and more interesting as everyone realizes that he may already know which item in the room should not be there.

Likely Skills: Appraisal, Bargain, Lore, Awareness, Social Grace, Quiet Self-Defense
Traits & Abilities:
• **Artifact Sense**: Ishaan can often identify when an object is unusually warm, symbolically active, or wrongly placed.
• **Sight Talisman**: Briefly grants him the ability to perceive Creeps and portal residue directly.

• **Dealer's Poise**: He is hard to rattle in negotiation or polite threat scenes.
• **Archive of Dangerous Taste**: His inventory may contain exactly the wrong thing needed by exactly the wrong visitor.

Companion Use: Ishaan is useful in artifact, archive, and trade stories, especially where careful adult competence and old-object literacy matter.

Delilah Hart

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Cane, Stage Prop, or Knife Palm — 1d4

Delilah Hart is sixty-seven, dramatic, silver-haired, and moves with the absolute confidence of someone who spent decades making rooms look where she wanted them to look. A retired stage magician, she dresses beautifully, speaks like applause still matters, and has the steady wrists and wicked smile of a woman who has palmed cards, knives, flowers, lies, and expectations for longer than most people have been alive. Her stage instincts remain intact, as does her refusal to become boring.

Delilah matters because her illusions accidentally mimic Limbo energy patterns.

Whether through old technique, personal timing, latent sensitivity, or one extremely unwell theater, her performances and private exercises have begun drawing minor Trespassers and low-level astral disturbances. She thinks these are "spirits of the stage," and while that is not technically correct, it is wrong in a stylish enough way that many Creeps resent correcting her. She has also once genuinely levitated during what was supposed to be an ordinary act. That has not improved her humility.

Emotionally, Delilah is delightful trouble. She brings glamour, denial, courage, and performative nerve into scenes that would otherwise stay too solemn. She is the sort of human who responds to the supernatural by adjusting the lighting and continuing.

Likely Skills: Performance, Deception, Sleight of Hand, Presence, Showmanship, Social Control
Traits & Abilities:
• **Stage Glamour Echo**: Delilah's performance spaces may accidentally resonate with Limbo-adjacent energies.
• **Misdirection Master**: She gains Advantage when hiding an object, redirecting attention, or controlling where an audience looks.
• **Nerve of a Professional**: She is harder to shake through fear or spectacle than most humans.
• **Accidental Levitation**: Rare astral flares around her may produce real effects from fake stagecraft.

Companion Use: Delilah is excellent in theater, illusion, performance, and social-chaos missions where wit and nerve matter as much as occult precision.

Important Archive Persons (Historical)

Some humans become larger in Vigil records than in their own lives. These are the names, half-names, and missing files that recur across generations of reports. They belong less to current human society and more to Limbo's long administrative memory.

The Candle Child

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: None known

No verified name survives. No single age is agreed upon. The Candle Child appears in late nineteenth-century records as a legendary sighted child who allegedly walked fully into Limbo and returned with memory intact. Later accounts describe portals brightening around them, closet thresholds warming in their presence, and older Creeps lowering their voices when the child's route was mentioned. Some reports imply the child was frightened. Others insist they were eerily calm. All agree on one detail: candlelight behaved strangely around them, flaring higher and steadier when they approached.

In setting terms, the Candle Child functions almost as a folk saint, omen, and administrative headache all at once. Some Creeps whisper that the child may have been partly dream-born, or touched by a threshold so early and so deeply that ordinary human categories no longer fit cleanly. Whether they survived long after their return is unclear. Whether they return still, in dreams or records or very bad moments, is a question some Vigil archivists refuse to answer casually.

Likely Skills: Unknown; likely innate portal sensitivity, dream resilience, exceptional childhood Sight
Traits & Abilities:
• **Legendary Portal Affinity**: Presence around thresholds may have strengthened or clarified them.
• **Full Return**: Said to have entered and returned from Limbo with memory unbroken.
• **Folkloric Weight**: Any clue tied to the Candle Child should feel historically significant, spiritually loaded, and administratively inconvenient.

Companion Use: Best used as a historical mystery, vision figure, dream encounter, or archival thread rather than a present-tense Companion.

Emmerich Quade

Threat: 2
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Improvised weapon, sling, or knife — 1d4

Emmerich Quade vanished into Limbo at thirteen during the 1920s and never cleanly returned, at least not by any standard a filing office would trust. Records describe him as a notorious Truant: sharp-faced, bright-eyed, underfed, quick-moving, and far too comfortable with hidden ways. Some later Vigil reports insist he became a minor ally to certain Creeps. Others suggest he changed into something less reassuring over time. He is occasionally sighted during deep liminal disturbances, usually as an older boy or young man who should not still be either.

Emmerich carries the emotional weight of all good Truant legends: freedom, tragedy, adaptation, and the fear that the realm keeps what it teaches. If encountered, he should feel half human, half local, and entirely too practiced at surviving places that eat certainty.

Likely Skills: Stealth, Survival, Improvised Theft, Route Sense, Quick Hands, Limbo Adaptation
Traits & Abilities:
• **Truant Survivor**: Emmerich knows old routes, hidden cuts, and survival habits no ordinary human child should retain.
• **Liminal Persistence**: He may appear during disturbances where the boundary between Human World and Limbo grows thin.
• **Ambiguous Allegiance**: He may help, mislead, trade, vanish, or test a Cohort depending on mood and circumstance.
• **Not Entirely Human-Side Anymore**: The longer he remained in Limbo, the less certain ordinary categories became.

Companion Use: Emmerich works well as a mysterious short-term guide, unreliable ally, or emotionally loaded encounter figure.

Hana Mirelle

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: None ordinarily

Hana Mirelle surfaced in the 1970s as a recorder of paranormal experiences whose notes are, from a Limbo perspective, infuriatingly accurate. Her surviving pages include sketches of Creeps, portals, route distortions, and threshold behaviors that predate modern Vigil mapping in several cases. She wrote with the determined observational tone of someone trying to document impossible things before the world could shame them back into silence. At some point, she nearly exposed too much, published too close to the truth, and then disappeared from public life with the sort of neatness that always makes archives suspicious.

Physically, surviving photographs show an alert, sharp-cheeked woman with severe hair, practical clothing, and the intense slightly haunted gaze common to people who have spent too long trying to decide whether their notes prove genius or ruin. Her records suggest courage, obsession, and a stubborn refusal to stop once pattern became visible.

Likely Skills: Investigation, Observation, Sketching, Research, Persistence
Traits & Abilities:
• **Accurate Recorder**: Hana's notes often grant Advantage to later investigators if recovered intact.
• **Portal Sketches**: Her diagrams may reveal threshold patterns or route relationships overlooked by formal mapping.
• **Near Exposure Event**: Any surviving material tied to her is likely sensitive, contested, or actively hidden.

Companion Use: Best as an archival presence, recovered notebook voice, missing-person mystery, or possible older recluse-contact if still living in secrecy.

Captain Deron Hale

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Fire Axe — 1d6+1

Captain Deron Hale, a firefighter active from the 1980s into the early 2000s, is one of the most practical and respected Human World figures in multiple Vigil records. Broad, capable, smoke-scarred, and physically imposing in the way rescue professionals often are, Hale is remembered as the sort of man who moved toward disaster because someone had to. During the Human World portal breach known as the **Neon Wake Event**, he was deliberately granted permission to see Creeps so he could escort civilians to safety while Cohorts repaired a ruptured threshold.

That one event changed his place in the archives permanently.

Hale matters because he is proof that a human adult can be brought fully into the operational truth of Limbo, perform under impossible conditions, and remain useful rather than broken. His records read like a love letter to competence under supernatural duress. He may no longer be active, depending on campaign date, but his name still carries weight in certain emergency files for good reason.

Likely Skills: Athletics, Command, Rescue Operations, Firefighting, Endurance, Axe Use, Scene Control
Traits & Abilities:
• **Granted Sight Veteran**: Hale has seen Creeps

clearly under crisis conditions and retained operational usefulness.

- **Rescue Professional**: He excels in collapse, fire, evacuation, and civilian extraction scenarios.
- **Crisis Leadership**: Others often steady around him when panic is high.
- **Threshold Event Survivor**: He may possess insight into the Neon Wake Event, its aftermath, and its still-buried consequences.

Companion Use: Captain Hale is ideal as a rescue-oriented senior ally, veteran witness, retired consultant, or emergency operation Companion in Human World breach scenarios.

Shadows of the Waking Child

There are many kinds of trouble in Limbo.

Some arrive loudly: a breached portal, a shrieking Trespasser, a market panic, a Vigil alarm bell going wild in the middle of the wrong district. Some arrive slowly: a hush in the closetways where there should be laughter, a door that starts opening to the same dream twice, a child in the Human World drawing the same impossible face over and over until the paper seems to know more than the room around it. The most dangerous kind, however, is the trouble that does not yet know whether it is a monster, a miracle, a mistake, or a plea for help.

Shadows of the Waking Child is a campaign mission about that kind of trouble.

Across six connected missions, the Cohort is drawn into a widening pattern of instability touching both Limbo and the Human World: flickering thresholds, dream-strain, missing Creeps, frightened children, hostile incursions, old Vigil records, and the rising presence of something no one has encountered quite like this before. At the center of it all stands a human child named **Elias**, exhausted by dreams he cannot understand, and behind him—or perhaps beside him, or half inside him—moves another figure: pale, candle-eyed, unfinished, and calling from the edges of dream and Astral fracture. The Vigil does not yet know whether this being is a Trespasser, a dream-born anomaly, a liminal accident, a threat, or a wounded intelligence trying badly to become whole. The Cohort may be the first to find out.

This adventure works best when the Creepmaster leans into three overlapping tones at once.

First, it is a **threshold mystery**. The Cohort should feel that something is wrong before they understand what it is. Early clues should feel intimate and uncanny rather than enormous: a drawing, a flicker, a child's mutter, a broken charm, a shape in the basement shadows that does not act like ordinary shadow-things. The campaign becomes larger as it proceeds, but it begins in a place small enough to fit under a bed or behind a boiler.

Second, it is a **dream-pressure story**. The threat is not purely physical, though it will become physical often enough. Dreams matter here. Fear matters. Memory, emotional residue, sleep habits, and symbolic spaces matter. The Cohort should often feel that they are tracking not just a creature, but a relationship between a child, a dream, and a broken threshold that has started behaving like a wound.

Third, it is still **CREEPS!**. That means the setting's dark humor should remain present, even when the danger becomes serious. Not every scene should become solemn just because portals are flickering and nightmare-things are turning up in domestic spaces. Creeps are still Creeps. They still mutter, bicker, improvise, complain, make terrible field assessments, and try to stay professionally useful while standing in profoundly unprofessional circumstances. The Human World remains full of radiators that hiss ominously for no reason, adults who keep missing the obvious, and children who say the most terrifying things in the calm tone they usually reserve for asking where socks go when they die.

At the table, **Shadows of the Waking Child** can be run for a single Protagonist in standard One-on-One play or for a small band using the **Cohort Play Rules**. In either form, the story should stay personal. Even when the scope expands to multiple unstable portals and deep Astral consequences, the emotional center remains close: a child, a room, a voice in the dark, and the creeping realization that

something on the other side of sleep is asking to be let through.

If the Creepmaster wishes, the campaign may emphasize any of the following:

- **Investigation and creeping dread**, with a slow build from household strangeness to dream-fracture catastrophe
- **Protective mission play**, in which the Cohort increasingly takes responsibility for Elias and the threshold surrounding him
- **Occult mystery**, focused on archival clues, Vigil history, and the true nature of the Waking Child
- **Emotional supernatural drama**, in which fear, loneliness, and unfinished identity matter as much as claws and breaches
- **Threshold action-horror**, with growing portal incidents, incursions, and unstable dream-entities pushing the Cohort into harder field operations

Whatever emphasis is chosen, one truth should remain clear throughout: the Waking Child is not a clean villain. That uncertainty is the engine of the campaign. If the players know too early that they are simply hunting a bad thing to hit until it stops moving, much of the adventure's best tension is lost. They should suspect danger immediately. They should understand tragedy gradually.

The campaign begins, as many Limbo problems do, with a single door behaving badly.

Part I — The Flickering Door

Part Summary

A stable portal tied to a quiet Human World home has begun to flicker, hum, and pulse with the wrong kind of rhythm. The disturbance is too irregular to be simple wear, too subtle to justify panic, and too persistent to ignore. A Cohort is dispatched to investigate, determine whether the cause is a Trespasser, a Truant, or some other instability entirely, and recover any missing Vigil equipment if the situation has already turned field-ugly. What begins as a routine threshold inspection will quickly become something stranger.

This first part is meant to establish the campaign's emotional scale. The danger should feel intimate, close to household life, and disturbingly unfinished. The Cohort should leave with more questions than answers, but those questions should be sharp enough to pull them onward.

Primary Objective

Investigate the flickering portal and determine the cause of the instability.

Secondary Objective

Recover any missing Vigil equipment and identify whether a field operative has already been compromised, lost, or driven off.

Creepmaster Goals for Part I

This opening mission should accomplish several things at once:

- introduce the Human World site tied to Elias and his family
- establish that the disturbance is not a normal Trespasser incident

- place the Cohort in direct contact with physical clues, dream residue, and a human child's influence without fully revealing the truth
- introduce the idea that another Creep has already encountered the problem and barely survived it
- end on a note of unease rather than resolution

The players should feel competent, but not comfortable.

Opening Briefing

The Cohort is summoned to a route station, local portal office, Vigil monitoring post, or similar threshold-control location appropriate to the campaign. The briefing should feel routine at first. That is part of the charm. Limbo has many doors. Most do not become campaign-defining just because they hum wrong for an hour.

Read Aloud: Opening Briefing

The briefing chamber smells of warm chalk, lamp oil, and the kind of hurried paperwork that means someone higher up has started caring without yet admitting panic. A portal slate has been set on the table between you, marked with a simple route sigil and a neat little notation that should feel reassuring if it were not for the second note written beneath it in faster hand:

Light fluctuation irregular. Threshold tone unstable. Field check required immediately.

The assigned passage is tied to an ordinary human home—quiet district, low-traffic route, no major Trespasser history, no recent ritual strain, no legal complications worth swearing about. In other words, the sort of door everyone prefers right up until it starts making itself interesting.

The officer on duty taps the slate once with a claw, pen, or ringed knuckle—depending on how much respect they think you've earned today—and says,

"Find out why it's flickering. Recover any missing Vigil gear. If it's a Truant, drag it back by the ear. If it's a Trespasser, discourage it. If it's something else..."

A pause.

"Try not to let it become paperwork."

Briefing Notes for the Creepmaster

If the Cohort asks questions, the local authority can provide the following:

- The portal has been stable for years.
- The Human World location is a basement access point in an older home with boiler heat and infrequent direct threshold traffic.
- The flicker is irregular, not rhythmic enough to suggest simple mechanical decay.
- A low-priority inspection was initiated, but the assigned watcher has not checked back in.
- No major breach has been recorded yet.
- The humming reported by station staff is wrong for ordinary route resonance.

If you want an early pressure beat, let the briefing officer visibly choose not to say that last part until asked. That always helps.

Scene 1 — Arrival at the Passage Hall

The Cohort arrives at the local Limbo-side threshold chamber: a passage hall, portal station, or subsidiary route chamber tied to the Human World basement access point. This is the first place where the mission should stop feeling routine.

The hall itself should be ordinary by Limbo standards: rune set, frame braces, threshold tags, maintenance fittings, maybe a signal lantern, maybe a half-eaten ration wrap from someone who meant to come back in a minute and has now become somebody else's problem. But the portal is visibly wrong. The light pulses unevenly. The frame hums with a strained half-note. Runes that should sit quiet now buzz and tremble like insects trapped in glass.

This scene is about tone, inspection, and first-contact clue work.

Read Aloud: Arrival at the Passage Hall

> The passage hall is small, serviceable, and far too nervous for its size. The rune marks around the frame are vibrating in little irritated bursts, and the portal-light inside the threshold is not holding steady. It flickers—not fast, not random, but with a hesitant uneven pulse like something on the other side is breathing near it without quite touching.
>
> There is also a hum.
>
> Not the clean threshold tone of a healthy passage, and not the grinding whine of a door about to tear itself sideways. This is softer than that. Stranger. Almost thoughtful.
>
> Chalk tools have been left on the inspection shelf. One stabilizer pin lies on the floor. The whole room has the unsettling feel of a place where someone intended to do routine maintenance and instead found a reason to stop smiling.

What the Cohort Can Observe

Without any test, the Cohort can notice:

- The portal is active, but strained.
- The instability is not severe enough to count as a full breach yet.
- Some inspection tools are present, suggesting someone began examining the frame.

- One tool or charm is missing.
- There are no obvious signs of a full struggle in the hall.

Useful Tests

Use whichever skills are most appropriate for the characters involved.

Dreamcraft, Sorcery, Lore, or similar
Can identify that the astral vibration is wrong in a way that does not match common Trespasser pressure, routine dream seepage, or simple portal fatigue.

Engineering, Portal Lore, or a setting-appropriate technical skill
Can determine that the instability is not mechanical failure. The frame is responding to something rather than breaking on its own.

Awareness or Stealth-related approach work
Can help the Cohort enter quietly, notice subtle residue, or realize that something may already be waiting beyond the threshold.

Clues in the Passage Hall

A successful investigation here may reveal:

- The astral signature is **unknown** and does not resemble standard Truant or Trespasser residue.
- The disturbance seems **bidirectional**—something is not merely pressing through the portal, but also reaching toward it from the dream-side.
- A missing Vigil charm or field tool suggests a prior responder may have crossed or been dragged into the Human World side unexpectedly.
- The humming intensifies slightly when anyone mentions children, sleep, or "dream activity" aloud, which is not reassuring.

Creepmaster Guidance

Do not reveal Elias or the Waking Child directly yet. The best tone here is "wrong, but not legible." Let the players know this is unusual. Do not let them know yet *how* unusual.

Scene 2 — The Human World Side

The portal opens into an old basement: boiler, pipes, concrete floor, dust, storage shelving, cardboard boxes, the faint smell of iron, warm metal, old detergent, and the particular gloom of a room in which too many household things have been forgotten but not discarded. This should feel ordinary in the best possible way. Ordinary rooms make threshold wrongness work harder.

The Cohort's first job on the Human World side is to assess the immediate area, recover evidence, and determine whether anything crossed recently. The answer is yes, but not in a clean, fully documented way.

Read Aloud: Entering the Basement

> The Human World side opens into a basement warm with boiler heat and thick with the smell of old concrete, dust, paint cans, cardboard, and one lonely sock that has lost every argument except the last one. Pipes tick overhead. Somewhere above, floorboards murmur with ordinary family life.
>
> At first glance, the room looks undramatic enough to be insulting. Shelves, boxes, a low workbench, old

holiday junk, a furnace that sounds mildly resentful of existence. Then the details begin to arrange themselves.

A paper lies near the base of the far wall, half crumpled and marked in bright child-crayon.

A scuff in the dust nearby is too deep and too narrow for a shoe.

And not far from the portal threshold itself, something metallic catches the light for just a second before the boiler gives a low unhappy knock, as if the whole room would prefer not to be part of this.

Evidence in the Basement

The Cohort can find the following:

A child's crayon drawing
It depicts a "tall smiling shadow." The proportions are wrong in ways that feel dream-driven rather than artistically sloppy. The figure may have too many teeth, or too gentle a posture, or one hand raised in a way that could be greeting or beckoning depending on how long one stares.

A faint footprint
Not human. Too long, too soft-edged, and matching the residue pattern of a Shadowling or Shadowling-like entity.

A fallen Vigil charm
Likely belonging to a missing field Creep or minor route operative. This confirms that someone from Limbo came through before the Cohort and did not leave cleanly.

Possible Threat: Shadowlings or Scout Presence

Depending on desired pacing, the basement may contain:

- **1–2 Shadowlings**
- a **Night-Between scout**
- or merely enough residue to imply one fled moments before the Cohort arrived

If you use an encounter, keep it sharp and brief. Part I is not about a large fight. It is about the feeling that even the enemies do not fully understand the thing they are circling.

Read Aloud: If the Threat Reveals Itself

Something shifts in the dark between shelving units. Not much. Just enough. A shape peels itself half free from the corner as though shadow has remembered it owns joints. Another flicker follows near the boiler pipe, low and fast.

The basement does not become a battlefield all at once. It becomes worse than that first. It becomes a place where the dark has started watching back.

Running the Encounter

Shadowlings here should be cautious, testing, and slightly agitated. They are not acting like ordinary scavenging trespassers. If pressed, they may flee rather than die. If captured, they are difficult to interrogate, but the Cohort may note:

- they are behaving as if drawn by the site rather than commanding it
- they are agitated by the crayon drawing
- they repeatedly orient toward the ceiling above, implying interest in the child upstairs

If the Night-Between scout is used instead, it should feel like a watcher or sampler, not the real threat.

Important Tone Note

The room above belongs to a family. The basement should never feel disconnected from that fact. Let there be the occasional footstep overhead. A washing machine hum. Muffled voices. The banal noise of a household continuing while the Cohort investigates the edge of a supernatural incident beneath it. That contrast is half the scene.

Scene 3 — Return to Limbo

When the Cohort returns, they discover that they are not the first to have poked this door badly. A small Creep named **Bibble Ashpocket** is found unconscious near the portal, either on the passage-hall floor, in an adjacent maintenance nook, or collapsed behind the inspection desk as though trying very hard to become somebody else's later problem.

Bibble is the first direct witness to what happened here, though his account is fragmented by shock, half-memory, and the simple fact that seeing something impossible is no easier just because one is already a Creep.

Read Aloud: Finding Bibble

> Back in Limbo, the passage hall feels colder than it did before, though the runes are no calmer for it. Near the threshold shelf, half under a spill of chalk packets and a rolled-up route cloth, lies a small Creep with soot on his sleeves and the expression of someone who has lost a fight with surprise.
>
> He is breathing. Barely respectably, but breathing. One hand is still clenched around the strap of an empty field satchel. The other jerks once when the portal hum stutters.
>
> When his eyes flutter open, they do not focus on you first. They focus on the door.
>
> Then he whispers, hoarse and terrified:
>
> "It... it wasn't a Shadow..."
>
> He swallows hard.
>
> "It looked like a child."

Bibble Ashpocket

Bibble is a minor route operative, maintenance runner, or low-level Vigil attached depending on how formal you want the local structure to be. He is not a great hero. That is useful. His fear lands better if he is the sort of small professional whose job is usually to carry tools, check seals, and complain about being assigned doors more interesting than his pay scale.

He can provide the following, in fragments:

- He happened to be passing the players' portal.
- Something crossed the portal and ran into him.
- It was not a normal shadow-thing.
- It looked like a child—but wrong, blurred, or lit from inside in an impossible way.
- It did not attack him directly.
- It looked *at* him in a way that made him feel as though it already knew who he was.
- Bibble fainted and didn't see where it went.
- Bibble is NOT the creep who had left traces around the portal.

What Bibble Does Not Know

- Whether the child-shape was Elias
- Whether it was the Waking Child
- Whether it crossed physically
- Whether it meant harm

That uncertainty is important.

End of Part I — The New Imprint

The mission concludes when the Cohort secures the immediate site, stabilizes the portal enough to prevent a short-term incident, and returns the findings to local authority. The true end beat comes with analysis: the residue recorded from the portal does not match any known Truant, Trespasser, or common nightmare incursion pattern.

This should land as the campaign's first hard turn.

Read Aloud: Closing Beat

> The portal light settles, but not properly. More like something has stopped scratching at the frame for the moment and gone quiet to think.
>
> The residue slate takes the imprint badly. The first recording crystal clouds, the second cracks, and the third finally holds long enough to show a pattern none of the local tags recognize. Not Truant. Not Trespasser. Not simple dream-spill.
>
> Something powerful brushed this door.
> Something child-shaped.
> Something unfamiliar.
>
> Around the hall, the practical noises of Limbo begin again: chalk scratch, lantern hiss, someone swearing in the corridor, the paperwork of the world trying to resume. But the room does not feel routine now.
>
> Somewhere, a child is dreaming too hard.
>
> Somewhere else, something is listening back.

Rewards and Advancement Hooks

At the end of Part I, possible rewards include:

- standard session **GP** for investigation, survival, and containment
- gratitude or recognition from local route authority
- recovered or partially recovered Vigil equipment
- access to Bibble Ashpocket as a later witness or side contact
- permission to continue the investigation into related portal incidents

Major hooks leading into **Part II — The Missing Truant**:

- Bibble's description of the child-shape
- the recovered drawing
- the unfamiliar astral imprint
- signs that another Creep has already become obsessed with the site
- route chatter about a missing young Truant investigating the same threshold on their own

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Creepmaster Notes for Part I

This mission should be played with restraint. The temptation is to over-explain because the larger six-part plot is already visible behind the curtain. Resist that. Let the players meet the mystery in household-scale fragments. Their first contact with the Waking Child story should feel like finding a child's drawing in the wrong room and realizing the paper knows more than you do.

The best emotional rhythm for Part I is:

- routine assignment
- wrongness at the door
- ordinary domestic space made uncanny
- evidence of prior Creep involvement
- a small but meaningful threat
- a frightened witness
- one piece of truly new information

That is enough. The door has flickered. The shape has been seen. The residue is wrong. The campaign now has permission to become stranger.

Part II — The Missing Truant

Part Summary

Following the disturbances at the flickering portal, the Cohort learns that a young Truant Creep named **Rilli Softstitch** disappeared into the Shadowed Tunnels while investigating the same anomaly without authorization, supervision, or the common decency to leave a complete route note. This is exactly the sort of decision young Truants specialize in making when they are equal parts curious, frightened, and convinced that if they do not solve the problem personally, the adults will ruin it with process.

Rilli's disappearance turns the campaign from a contained threshold problem into a rescue mission. The Cohort must enter the Shadowed Tunnels, follow her trail through dream-stale corridors and malformed echo chambers, and piece together what she found before panic, pursuit, or local instability closes the route around them. By the end of Part II, the players should understand three things clearly:

First, the child-shape seen at the portal was not imagination.
Second, the dream pressure is spreading beyond a single household threshold.
Third, the name **Elias** now matters.

This part should feel more dangerous than Part I, but still not like full open war. It is a tunnel search, a dream-sick chase, and a slow reveal that somebody—or something—has begun touching multiple layers of reality at once.

Primary Objective

Find Rilli Softstitch and bring her back alive if possible.

Secondary Objective

Learn what she discovered in the tunnels and why it frightened her badly enough to leave warnings rather than a proper report.

Creepmaster Goals for Part II

Part II should:

- establish Rilli as more than just a missing body
- reveal that the portal mystery has already spread into tunnel-space
- introduce environmental wrongness tied to dream pressure
- give the Cohort physical evidence of the Waking Child's growing influence
- deliver the campaign's first explicit name clue: **Elias**
- end with the sense that the Human World side must now be investigated directly

The tone should be tighter and more enclosed than Part I. The Human World basement was ordinary space made uncanny. The Shadowed Tunnels are Limbo space becoming symbolically unstable from within.

Opening Briefing

The Cohort is either summoned directly after Part I's analysis or given only enough time to sleep badly and eat something warm before being redirected. Rilli Softstitch—a young Truant, route-runner, repair helper, or lightly attached local nuisance depending on your campaign's cast—has gone missing after privately investigating the same passage anomaly. Her last known direction leads into

the **Shadowed Tunnels**, a stretch of older route-space already disliked by everyone sensible.

Read Aloud: Opening Briefing

> The second briefing has less paperwork and more irritation, which is usually how one recognizes that things have become real.
>
> A slate, a bag, and a chalk-marked route strip have been laid out on the table. The bag belongs to **Rilli Softstitch**, which is already bad enough. The fact that it has been brought back without Rilli attached to it improves nothing.
>
> Someone explains, in the deeply controlled tone used by professionals trying not to say "I told her not to do this," that Rilli went after the flickering-door mystery on her own. She took a side route through the Shadowed Tunnels, left one partial mark, then stopped reporting.
>
> The route itself is old, half-maintained, and famous mainly for three things: stale dream-air, unhelpful echoes, and a long institutional history of becoming everybody's least favorite shortcut.
>
> The final note in Rilli's hand is short enough to be rude:
>
> **Saw the chalk again. Saw the face again. Going deeper. If I'm right, it isn't following the door — it's following the dream.**
>
> Below that, a second line has been written hard enough to break the chalk:
>
> **If I don't come back, don't trust the smiling one.**

Briefing Notes for the Creepmaster

The Cohort can learn the following before departure:

- Rilli was last seen carrying basic route gear, chalk, a satchel, and at least one stabilizing charm
- She is competent enough to survive minor trouble, but not so disciplined that she always reports it properly
- The Shadowed Tunnels are passable, but not ideal
- Several old route-watchers have complained recently about strange sound behavior, dream-stale air, and marks on the walls that do not match any current district hand
- If Rilli saw the same child-shape Bibble described, then whatever is happening is no longer staying close to the original portal

If you want to add emotional pressure, let someone in the briefing room clearly care about Rilli and resent the Cohort only slightly for being the ones sent after her.

The Shadowed Tunnels

The Shadowed Tunnels should not feel like just another stretch of cave. They are old, echo-heavy, and slightly wrong even before the campaign's mystery begins touching them. Their stone is damp in places, dust-dry in others, lined with older route cuts, side cracks, broken support arches, and abandoned maintenance niches where the light never seems quite willing to settle. Here and there, petrified roots punch through the wall, or old chalk

warnings linger beneath newer tags, or some earlier crew's attempt at reassurance has failed so completely that it now reads as threat.

With the current disturbance, the tunnels have become worse. Dream-air pockets gather in stale stretches. Sounds return altered. Claw marks appear where no body should have fit comfortably. The Cohort should feel that the tunnels are not merely holding danger; they are listening to it.

This entire section can be played as a sustained tension route rather than one single scene. If the group enjoys travel-pressure play, let the tunnels breathe. Let pauses matter. Let the wrong echo come back a little too quickly.

Read Aloud: Entering the Shadowed Tunnels

> The Shadowed Tunnels begin like any other bad decision in Limbo: with old stone, inadequate light, and the persistent feeling that someone else used to be responsible for this stretch before being corrected by history.
>
> The passage narrows, bends, and drops by degrees. The walls show old route-scratches, newer chalk, and older still carvings half-lost under mineral bloom. The air is wrong almost immediately—not foul, exactly, but stale in a dream-heavy way, as though too many sleeping thoughts once passed through here and never fully cleared.
>
> Somewhere deeper ahead, a sound returns your own footstep to you.
>
> It returns one beat late.
>
> Then, just for a moment, something else walks with it.

Tunnel Travel Pressure

The Shadowed Tunnels are a good place to use small environmental pressure rather than immediate combat. The Cohort may encounter:

- stale pockets of dream-air that dull concentration or stir memory
- unnatural echoing sounds that make it difficult to judge distance
- old webbing, root tangles, or half-fallen support rock
- wall markings that look like route sigils until examined closely
- moments where the tunnel seems to "remember" a child's voice nearby

The point is not to punish movement. It is to make every forward step feel like investigation.

Reading the Route

The Cohort can track Rilli through a combination of:

- light chalk marks
- scuffed boot signs
- a thread caught on rough stone
- bits of dropped satchel material
- handprints or palm smears where she braced herself
- quick little notes written in haste and partial panic

Her route behavior tells a story. At first she was cautious. Later she was hurrying. Later still she was trying to record things without stopping long enough to be fully safe.

Scene 1 — Following Rilli's Trail

This first major section of the tunnels is about pursuit and clue-gathering. The Cohort must follow Rilli while navigating stale dream-air, collapsed sections, wrong echoes, and signs that she was not alone.

Read Aloud: Rilli's Trail

> The first clear sign is a chalk arrow low on the wall, the kind of quick field mark used by someone who expects to double back in ten minutes and explain themselves badly afterward.
>
> The second is less comforting: a drag mark in the dust, not of a body, but of a satchel corner or tool bag pulled too quickly around a bend. A little farther on, one of Rilli's thread-charms hangs snagged on a broken outcrop, turning slowly in air that does not seem to be moving.
>
> After that, the signs get stranger. A wall scratch that might be a claw mark. A patch of cold. A sound like someone whispering just ahead, too soft to catch, gone when listened for directly.
>
> Then another chalk note, this one tighter and messier than the first:
>
> **Not alone. It keeps using the echoes.**

Creepmaster Guidance

A tracking-focused character should feel useful here. Let the players discover not only *where* Rilli went, but *how her state changed*. She was not simply lost. She was learning while moving, and what she learned frightened her.

If you want a minor tension beat, let the Cohort hear their own earlier conversation return from ahead in a voice none of them used.

Scene 2 — The Echoing Chamber

Eventually the route opens into a broader chamber where sound pools and misbehaves. This is the heart of Part II's middle act: the first place where the mystery becomes fully visual, and the place where Rilli's panic leaves enough shape behind to be understood.

The chamber should feel old, half-natural and half-cut, with broken columns or root-fused stone shelves around the outer edge. The acoustics are wrong enough that every whisper becomes suspicious. This is where the Cohort finds Rilli's torn-open bag.

Read Aloud: The Echoing Chamber

> The tunnel spills into a chamber large enough to make your lanterns feel suddenly small. Sound does not travel correctly here. It gathers. A scrape somewhere to the left returns from above. A breath too close to the wall comes back from the far side of the room as though someone else took it and thought better of admitting the theft.
>
> Near the base of a collapsed shelf of stone lie scattered items as though dropped in haste or perhaps a struggle. Chalk. String. A snapped charm-pin. A field wrap.
>
> And on one torn sheet of paper, a child's face drawn three times in a row. The same face each time. Rounder on the

first sketch. Thinner on the second. On the third, the eyes are wrong—lit from inside like candle flames seen through wet glass.

Beneath the sketches, written again and again in hard chalk strokes:

He's waking up.
He's waking up.
He's waking up.

What the Cohort Finds

Rilli's bag's contents:

- a drawing of a child's face in shifting versions
- several hurried chalk notes
- fragments of threshold notation
- broken charm traces
- one clear repeated phrase: **He's waking up**

This is the first moment the players should feel that the child-shape is not merely haunting the route but becoming more coherent.

Optional Encounter

This chamber is an excellent place for a sharp, strange fight if needed:

- **2 Nightmare Spawn**
- or **1 Fear-Elemental Wisp**
- or another low- to medium-threat manifestation appropriate to your existing creature list

These entities should feel attracted to the chamber by the emotional residue rather than fully controlled by it. If the Cohort fights them, the battle should reinforce that dream pressure is making the environment thinner, not that the true threat has arrived in person yet.

Read Aloud: If the Chamber Turns Hostile

The air in the chamber tightens first. Then the lantern light gives that ugly little bend that says reality is becoming negotiable nearby.

Something peels out of the echo before it fully becomes visible—half fear, half form, with the desperate unfinished shape of a thing made from someone else's bad night and then left too long in the dark.

The room does not explode into violence. It curdles into it.

Clues from the Chamber

After the encounter, or simply through inspection if you skip the fight, the Cohort may determine:

- Rilli was drawing what she saw to keep it stable in her own mind

- the phrase “He’s waking up” was written compulsively, not ceremonially
- something in the chamber was using the echoes to disorient or stalk her
- there are signs of a secondary membrane tear deeper in the route, suggesting she retreated or was driven toward it

This should point clearly toward the next scene.

Scene 3 — The Collapsing Membrane

The final stretch of the route brings the Cohort to a failing astral membrane: a place where tunnel-space and dream-space have thinned against one another like skin bruising from opposite sides. Rilli is trapped there—not in the ordinary sense of being tied up, but partially sealed behind a collapsing shimmer-wall of distorted threshold matter, unable to fully push through without help.

This scene should carry urgency without becoming chaos. The Cohort has found her, but not yet saved her. More importantly, she is still lucid enough to speak.

Read Aloud: Finding Rilli

> The tunnel ahead narrows, then shines. Not with ordinary light—with the pale stretched gleam of something that should be elsewhere pressing too close to this side of the stone.

A membrane has formed across the passage: thin, trembling, half-transparent, like a sheet of wet glass trying very hard to remember whether it is a wall, a dream, or a door. Behind it, distorted by ripples of astral strain, a small figure pounds once, weakly, from the other side.

> It is Rilli.
>
> Her chalk-streaked face is pale under the tunnel dust, her satchel strap half-torn, one sleeve smeared with residue that catches too much light. When she sees you, relief hits her so hard it almost looks like pain.
>
> She leans close to the membrane, voice shaking.
>
> “Don’t let it hear you think too loud.”
>
> Then, after one breath more:
>
> “The child’s dreams… they’re touching everything.”

Rescuing Rilli

The Cohort may free her through:

- careful threshold stabilization
- physical breach supported by magic or Lore
- a Dreamcraft or Sorcery approach
- a teamwork sequence of holding the membrane stable while someone extracts her

This should feel like rescue under pressure, not just one easy roll and a reunion. The membrane is unstable. Mishandling it could:

- injure Rilli
- spread dream residue
- advance a Clock
- briefly open a wrong-side glimpse

What Rilli Knows

Once stabilized enough to speak, Rilli can reveal the following in fragmented but usable form:

- she followed the same wrong residue from the flickering portal
- she began seeing a child's face in reflective surfaces and tunnel-light distortions
- the dream pressure in the tunnels did not feel like possession
- it felt like communication, or attempted communication
- something else is involved—something that is trying to **wake** or **reach** this child through the dream-link
- she heard a name repeated in the route pressure: **Elias**

She does not understand what Elias is yet. She only knows the name matters and that the pressure is spreading outward rather than staying trapped at a single door.

Read Aloud: Rilli's Warning

> Rilli's voice is raw, as though she has spent too long whispering to keep the tunnel from noticing.
>
> "It isn't just in the house anymore," she says. "That's what I got wrong. I thought the door was the center. It isn't. The dreams are. The door is just where they started showing."
>
> She grips at your sleeve, satchel strap, or arm—whatever is nearest.
>
> "There's a child. Human-side. Elias. I heard the name in the pressure, in the chalk, in the echoing. Something's talking to him."
>
> She swallows, hard.
>
> "And something else..."
>
> Her eyes cut toward the trembling membrane behind her.
>
> "Something else wants him awake."

Closing the Route

Once Rilli is recovered, the Cohort has a choice: fully stabilize the damaged tunnel edge now, mark and withdraw, or push further in hopes of immediate answers. In most campaigns, the correct dramatic answer is to pull back with Rilli, the drawings, and the name **Elias**, because the next logical move is direct Human World investigation.

If the players insist on pushing further, let them glimpse only enough to justify fear:

- a distant child's laugh echoing from nowhere
- a second set of chalk marks they know no Creep wrote
- a pulse of candle-like eyes in the shimmer
- or a whisper repeating, very softly, *bring him through*

Do not reveal the Waking Child cleanly yet. That belongs later.

End of Part II — The Name

The key ending of this part is not just the rescue. It is the naming. Once a mystery gains a name, the campaign's momentum changes. The Cohort no longer has a pattern without a center. It has a child, a house, a route history, and a direct reason to

enter the Human World side intentionally rather than reactively.

Read Aloud: Closing Beat

> By the time you bring Rilli back, the tunnels feel less empty than before, which is impressive because they were never especially kind to begin with. The route can be marked, warded, narrowed, or temporarily sealed. The damage can be logged. The chalk can be bagged. The satchel can be returned.
>
> But one thing cannot be filed neatly now.
>
> The name stays in the room.
>
> **Elias**.
>
> Not a title. Not a route code. Not a creature mark. A child's name, carried through dream-stale air and repeated in places where names should not travel unless something wants them to.
>
> Behind you, the tunnel settles by degrees. Ahead of you, the next choice is obvious and unwelcome.
>
> Whatever is happening, it is no longer enough to study the door.
>
> Now you must look at the child.

Rewards and Advancement Hooks

By the end of Part II, the Cohort may gain:

- standard **GP** for rescue, investigation, and survival under pressure
- Rilli Softstitch as a living witness and possible recurring contact
- recovered notes, sketches, and route clues
- partial route authority to pursue the Human World side more aggressively
- increased Vigil interest in the case

Key hooks leading into **Part III — Echoes in the Human Home**:

- the name **Elias**
- evidence that the dream disturbance is centered on a living child
- signs that the child is communicating with something rather than merely being haunted
- proof that the threshold contamination is spreading beyond one basement portal

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Creepmaster Notes for Part II

The emotional work of Part II lies in making the mystery feel wider without yet making it impersonal. Rilli's rescue matters because she is a person, not just a clue-delivery system. The chamber matters because the drawings reveal fear becoming pattern. The tunnels matter because they show that dream pressure can move through Limbo's own spaces now.

Keep the pacing tense but readable. Let the players work. Let them infer. Let them earn the name. The campaign becomes much stronger if "Elias" lands as a discovery rather than a scheduled plot event.

The next part should now feel inevitable.

The Cohort has found the route.
Now it must enter the home.

Part III — Echoes in the Human Home

Part Summary

Armed now with a name, the Cohort returns to the Human World to observe **Elias** directly, study the home tied to the flickering threshold, and determine whether the child is possessed, haunted, manipulated, or something stranger. This part marks the campaign's emotional shift from threshold incident to household crisis. The home itself should become a character: heavy with strained family life, poor sleep, emotional residue, and the subtle domestic distortions that occur when the supernatural has been brushing the same walls for too long.

The Cohort will discover quickly that Elias is not a villain, not a host, and not a willing servant in any straightforward sense. He is exhausted, lonely, and in conversation with something beyond ordinary sight. The danger lies not in malice, but in contact. Something has taught him to draw doors, speak into dark corners, and wait for a promise to be fulfilled. Whatever is answering him is not merely peering through the portal anymore. It is teaching him how to meet it halfway.

By the end of this part, the Cohort should understand that the problem cannot be solved by guarding the basement door alone. Elias's inner life has become part of the threshold structure. That realization will push the campaign toward dream-entry in Part IV.

Primary Objective

Observe Elias without being detected and determine the nature of the force influencing him.

Secondary Objective

Identify physical and symbolic signs of dream-contact inside the home and prevent any immediate breach from reaching the child.

Creepmaster Goals for Part III

This part should:

- make Elias feel human, sympathetic, and central
- establish the emotional state of the household
- confirm that Elias is communicating rather than simply being attacked
- show that the entity on the other side is not fully identical to Elias's fear
- produce a direct nighttime supernatural incident that forces action
- leave the Cohort understanding that dreamspace itself must now be entered

Part III should feel tense in a quieter way than Part II. Much of the danger comes from not being seen, not disturbing the family, and not misreading the child.

Opening Approach

The Cohort enters the Human World in daylight or late afternoon, depending on how much time you want them to spend observing the house before the nighttime breach. Their task is no longer a simple threshold check. It is infiltration, observation, and delicate judgment. The house must be treated as a lived-in place first and a supernatural site second.

The family home should feel very ordinary in all the important ways: worn carpet, photographs, kitchen

clutter, a hallway too long when walked quietly, a tired parent voice from another room, heating vents that click at bad moments, and the mild emotional residue of real domestic strain. This is not a gothic mansion. It is a home being leaned on too hard by dreams.

Read Aloud: Approaching the House

> The house is ordinary in the insulting way only human homes can be when they are standing over a threshold problem large enough to ruin several lives. Siding, windows, a little yard, the practical shape of people trying to keep a life running on schedule. Nothing in the exterior announces that sleep has become structurally relevant here.
>
> Inside is a different matter. Even before crossing fully in, the Cohort can feel it: that dense household weight made of arguments not finished, dishes not yet washed, bad sleep, children's drawings, and the low invisible pressure of people trying very hard to remain ordinary while something in the house keeps declining the invitation.
>
> Somewhere above, a child is awake.
>
> Somewhere deeper in the walls, the portal is listening.

Initial Observations

From outside or during entry, the Cohort may note:

- the home is inhabited and active
- there are at least two adults present
- the emotional tone is strained, tired, and brittle
- the portal's influence is no longer contained to the basement
- the child's room above carries the strongest dream pressure

If the Cohort has previously encountered children like Emma, Nate, or Peni, it should become clear almost immediately that Elias is a different case. This is not just "child with Sight." This is "child under active dream relationship."

Scene 1 — The Human House

This first core scene is about moving through the house without drawing attention and studying the emotional atmosphere before direct contact with Elias. The home should feel layered with tension. Parents argue softly or sharply, depending on tone preference. The hallway seems longer than it should. Certain rooms carry more emotional weight than others. Elias's isolation should be palpable before he even appears.

Read Aloud: Inside the House

> Human homes are never really silent. This one certainly isn't. Floorboards shift. Pipes knock. Somewhere in the kitchen, something ceramic touches a counter harder than it needed to.
>
> A man and a woman are speaking in the next room with the tight careful volume adults use when they think a child is asleep and know perfectly well he isn't. You catch fragments.
>
> "He says it keeps talking to him—"
> "Then stop asking him what it says."
> "I'm not asking, I'm trying to—"

The rest blurs under the hum in the walls.

The hallway leading toward Elias's room feels too long for the size of the house. Family photographs line one side. Children's drawings line the other. Most are ordinary. Then one of them is not, and after that several stop feeling ordinary in retrospect.

Running the House

This scene is strongest when allowed to breathe. Let the Cohort move room to room, hide, observe, and study details. The key is to make the home feel emotionally inhabited.

The Cohort may discover:

- signs of parental exhaustion and repeated sleep disruption
- children's drawings showing doors, corners, figures, or repeated dark shapes
- subtle cold spots or pressure changes in certain passage points
- toys moved into odd patterns
- scribbled phrases or repeated shapes in notebooks
- old attempts by the parents to explain the "imaginary friend" problem in ordinary terms

Useful Skills

Characters may use appropriate tests to:

- move unseen
- study Elias's mood before approaching closer
- assess dream exhaustion, anxiety, and strain in the household
- detect occult contamination or threshold spread beyond the main portal
- infer that the parents are frightened but still rational enough to be useful later if handled well

Do not over-mechanize every room. One or two meaningful tests are enough if the players are engaging actively with the fiction.

Scene 2 — Elias in His Bedroom

This is the central discovery scene of Part III. The Cohort reaches Elias's room, either by stealth, by closetway movement, by hidden passage through the house, or by some small domestic miracle of timing. They find Elias not sleeping, but speaking softly into a dark corner of the room. The closet portal pulses. His voice overlaps, however slightly, with another child's voice—not fully synchronized, not fully separate.

This scene should land hard. It is the first direct evidence that Elias is in communication with something.

Read Aloud: Elias's Room

> Elias's room is dim in the soft uneven way of a place that has seen too many bad nights. The curtains are mostly drawn. Toys lie abandoned in patterns that might be ordinary if they did not seem to orient subtly toward the closet. Drawings cover part of one wall. Some are childish. Some are not.
>
> Elias sits on the edge of the bed in pajamas and bare feet, too still for his age, turning a crayon between both hands. His face is pale with fatigue. There are dark circles under his eyes that no child should be wearing like that.
>
> The closet door is shut. Light pulses very softly around the frame.
>
> Elias is speaking to the darkest corner of the room.
>
> "I did what you said," he whispers. "I drew the door. You said you'd come."
>
> Then he goes quiet and listens.
>
> When he answers again, his voice overlaps with another child's voice—not enough to sound possessed, not enough to sound sane, just enough to make the room feel wrong around the edges.
>
> "No," he says, more softly now. "They're scared of you."

Elias in Play

Do not rush this scene.

Elias should not act like a horror child or a little prophet. He is tired, lonely, and emotionally stretched thin. He does not understand what he is doing at the scale the Cohort understands it. To him, there is simply someone on the other side of the dark who talks like a child and promises that things will make sense if the door is drawn correctly.

The Cohort may observe:

- Elias is not visibly possessed
- he is carrying on a sustained two-way interaction
- the secondary voice is not identical to his own
- he appears emotionally attached to the unseen speaker
- the closet frame is syncing with his attention in tiny pulses

This should be deeply unsettling because of how gentle it is.

If the Cohort Interrupts

If they reveal themselves or make noise, Elias may:

- startle and become frightened
- address them directly if he can see Creeps
- ask whether they are "friends of the other boy"
- deny that he is in danger
- insist that the other child is lonely, not bad

That last point matters.

Scene 3 — Dream Residue Under the Bed

Once the Cohort searches the room properly, they find the first hard material evidence that this is not

merely conversation or ordinary child haunting. Under Elias's bed lies residue: black dust, small astral shards, and a drawing that should not exist in a Human World bedroom.

The room beneath the bed should feel like a private border.

Read Aloud: Under the Bed

> The space under the bed smells of dust, old wood, and something sharper underneath—like cold air dragged through a place that has no business remembering stars.
>
> Black dust has gathered there in a crescent, too dark and too fine to be ordinary dirt. Nestled within it are small astral shards no human child should possess, catching the room's dim light with the faint sickly beauty of broken threshold crystal.
>
> Folded near the back wall is one more drawing.
>
> This one is not of the house.
>
> It is a twisting tunnel system, spiraled and layered, with depth and route sense no ordinary child could fake by accident. Any Creep looking at it immediately recognizes the broad geometry: not exact, but close enough to hurt.
>
> Elias has drawn part of Limbo.

What the Cohort Learns

This scene should confirm:

- Elias is receiving information from beyond the house
- the communication includes spatial or dream-geographic content
- the black dust is dream-corruption or threshold residue
- the astral shards likely indicate micro-breaches or repeated dream contact
- Elias is not simply seeing things; he is being shown things

This is the point where the Cohort should begin suspecting that the Waking Child is not merely peering through but building correspondence.

Complication — An Adult Enters

This scene should include a human-scale interruption. An adult enters the room or approaches the doorway while the Cohort is hidden, observing, or midway through clue work. This is not a combat encounter. It is a domestic danger scene. The adults are not enemies, but the Cohort cannot simply announce itself unless the campaign has already gone wildly off-template.

The adult entering should be one of Elias's parents—tired, worried, and trying not to frighten him further.

Read Aloud: The Parent at the Door

> Floorboards sound in the hallway.
>
> Elias reacts before the Cohort has time to feel clever about hearing it first. He shoves the drawing half under the bed, wipes at his eyes, and turns toward the door with the posture of a child preparing to pretend he has been sleeping for hours.
>
> The knob turns.

> Warm hall light stretches across the floorboards, and a parent's silhouette fills the doorway—tired, human, carrying that complicated mixture of love and helplessness that makes domestic scenes harder than ambushes.
>
> "Elias?"
>
> A pause.
>
> "Who were you talking to, sweetheart?"

Handling the Complication

This can be played through stealth, concealment, emotional observation, or—if the Cohort has decided on a very bold approach—careful intervention.

What matters is the information revealed:

- the parents know Elias is talking to "someone"
- they are frightened and increasingly strained
- they have probably already considered doctors, sleep issues, behavior concerns, and ordinary explanations
- they are not yet occult-aware, but they are nearing the end of their tolerance for easy lies

This interruption humanizes the family and makes the household worth protecting.

Scene 4 — The Nightmare Breach

The final scene of Part III occurs at night, after the house has settled, after fear has had time to pool, and after Elias falls into unstable sleep. The Cohort may choose to remain and observe, or circumstances may force them into overnight protection. Either way, the breach comes.

Doors rattle. Windows frost. The closet portal pulses hard enough to shake the frame. The child's dream state opens a small rift, and things begin trying to come through.

This scene should be urgent, physical, and intimate. The goal is not to kill everything. The goal is to stop the breach before anything reaches Elias.

Read Aloud: The Breach Begins

> The house is asleep in the way frightened houses sleep: never deeply, never kindly, every little sound carrying farther than it should.
>
> Then the temperature drops.
>
> Not the ordinary night-house cooling, not a draft, not weather. The glass of the bedroom window flowers with frost from the corners inward. The closet door shivers in its frame. Somewhere downstairs, a mug falls over in the sink with a noise far too loud for the hour.
>
> Elias jerks in his sleep and whispers something the Cohort cannot quite hear.
>
> The closet pulses once.
>
> Twice.
>
> Then the seam around the door opens like a mouth trying very hard to be polite about it.

Running the Breach

Choose one of the outlined enemy forms or another existing creature that fits the campaign's current tone:

- **1 Nightmare Imp**
- **3 Shadowlings**

- **1 Fearling Swarm**
- or a combination appropriate to party size and prior pressure

The breach should feel unstable rather than fully formed. The creatures are forcing their way through a child's dream-state threshold, which means:

- the room itself may react
- gravity may feel briefly wrong
- toys may shift
- shadow may deepen under furniture
- the air may carry fragments of Elias's sleeping fear

The Cohort's objective is simple and immediate: stop the intruders before they reach Elias or spread into the house.

Scene Texture

This is a good place to let the dark humor of **CREEPS!** breathe under pressure:

- a brave little Creep fighting on top of a race-car bed
- a wardrobe door slamming dramatically for no narrative reason except meanness
- someone hissing tactical orders while tangled in a blanket fort
- a nightmare creature trying to emerge through a closet hung with perfectly ordinary children's jackets

The scene should still feel dangerous. It should also still feel like **CREEPS!**.

If the Cohort Succeeds

On success:

- the breach is shut or reduced
- the intruders are destroyed, driven back, or contained
- Elias survives the night without being taken or physically harmed
- the room remains tainted but stable enough for the next step

On a strong success:

- the Cohort may preserve part of the breach residue for later use
- a surviving clue from the entity beyond may remain
- Elias may speak in his sleep and reveal one more fragment

On failure or mixed success:

- Elias may be touched psychically
- the family may witness too much
- the room may become unusable without cleansing
- the next part begins under greater strain

End of Part III — The Need to Enter the Dream

By the end of the nightmare breach, the Cohort should understand that guarding Elias from the outside is no longer enough. The connection is happening inside sleep itself. The voice in the room is not just crossing a portal. It is meeting Elias in the dream-state and teaching the threshold from there.

This is the bridge to Part IV.

Read Aloud: Closing Beat

> By the time the room goes still again, stillness no longer feels like safety. The closet is shut, but not innocent. The

frost has thinned, but not fully vanished. Elias sleeps on, breathing hard, one hand curled around the blanket as though he has been holding onto something in the dark and does not yet know whether he let go.

Around the room, the evidence remains: dust, shards, drawings, wrong light, and a child whose dreams now clearly know the road to Limbo better than they should.

Whatever is reaching for him is not staying at the threshold.
It is meeting him where thresholds are made.

In sleep.

If the Cohort wants answers now—real answers—it will have to follow him there.

Rewards and Advancement Hooks

By the end of Part III, the Cohort may gain:

- standard **GP** for infiltration, protection, and successful breach containment
- direct observational knowledge of Elias
- dream residue, astral shards, and physical evidence for later study
- greater Vigil urgency around the case
- a decision point about how far they are willing to go to protect a human child

Direct hooks leading into **Part IV — The Dream-Bound**:

- Elias is not possessed; he is in contact
- the contact is anchored through dream-state, not just portal-space
- direct intervention now requires dream entry
- the shape called "the other boy" is becoming harder to ignore as a separate being

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Creepmaster Notes for Part III

This part works best if Elias is treated with real care. He is not an omen delivery system. He is the emotional center of the mission now. His tiredness, loneliness, and trust in the unseen voice should make the Cohort uneasy in a protective way, not just in a tactical one.

The house should also remain vivid. The campaign becomes stronger if the players remember not only the supernatural scenes, but the kitchen voices, hallway light, under-bed dust, and the deeply unfair fact that one small child's room has become a diplomatic crisis between worlds.

Part IV should now feel earned rather than merely fantastical. The Cohort has exhausted ordinary observation. The only road left goes inward.

Part IV — The Dream-Bound

Part Summary

With ordinary observation exhausted and the Human World side no longer sufficient to explain what is happening around Elias, the Cohort must do what sensible field doctrine prefers to postpone until absolutely necessary: enter the child's dream directly.

This is the first openly oneiric part of the campaign, and it should feel different immediately. Dreamspace is not Limbo, though it touches it. It is not the Human World, though it feeds on it. It is a layered internal country built from memory, fear, attachment, longing, symbolic distortion, and all the hidden emotional carpentry by which children survive things they cannot yet name properly. Elias's dreamscape has become dangerously porous. A second presence moves within it. Doors are appearing where no door should be. Paths loop, fracture, and reform. Things from Limbo have begun leaving traces there, and something from elsewhere has begun trying to claim the place as home.

Part IV is where the campaign stops asking whether the trouble is dream-linked and starts asking what sort of being can be born in that link strongly enough to call from both sides.

The Cohort enters this part with a practical goal—to identify the waking force influencing Elias—and an emotional one it may not yet understand fully: to determine whether Elias's fear is the threat, the symptom, or the shield.

By the end of this part, the players should have:

- entered and survived Elias's dreamscape
- learned that one of the most frightening figures present is not the true enemy
- seen the Waking Child directly for the first time
- understood that the Waking Child is not Elias, but is bound to him
- heard the Waking Child's central desire: to become whole

This is the campaign's first great reveal, and it should feel eerie, sad, and slightly beautiful before it becomes dangerous again.

Primary Objective

Enter Elias's dreamscape and identify the entity influencing him.

Secondary Objective

Learn the difference between Elias's fear and the force actually reaching across the threshold.

Creepmaster Goals for Part IV

This part should:

- feel dreamlike without becoming incoherent
- keep the players oriented through symbol, not just geography
- present dream logic as playable, not random
- reveal the emotional architecture around Elias
- introduce the **Tall Smile** as fear given form, but not the core malignancy
- reveal the **Waking Child** as real, unfinished, and calling for reunion
- end with the Cohort carrying enough knowledge to understand why Limbo itself is now becoming unstable in response

The dream should be strange, but not meaningless. Every wrong thing in it should point toward something true.

Entering the Dream

The Cohort may enter Elias's dream through Dreamcraft, ritual threshold work, guided portal sleep, shrine support, or some blend of all three depending on the campaign's available tools. However it is done, the process should feel precarious and intimate rather than grandly magical. They are not storming a sorcerer's fortress. They are lowering themselves into a sleeping child's unstable symbolic interior while something else is already in there.

If you wish, this scene can begin near the closet threshold itself, with the room dim, Elias asleep, the house silent, and the dream-gate forming not outward but inward.

Read Aloud: Entering the Dream

> Elias sleeps badly. Even now, with the room quiet and the closet shut, his breathing catches now and then as though some part of him is still running somewhere the body cannot follow.
>
> The ritual, method, or miserable improvisation required to enter his dream does not open a clean door. It opens a softness. The edges of the room blur first. The floorboards lose confidence. The closet seam brightens, then stretches thin as paper held against a candle.
>
> The air changes.
>
> The smell of blankets, dust, and old house fades into something stranger: rain on attic wood, warm crayons, cold stair rails, nightlight plastic, the taste of tears swallowed too quietly, and underneath all of it the silver-thin pressure of Astral distance.
>
> Then the room folds.
>
> Not violently. Almost politely.
>
> And the Cohort steps into the inside of a child's sleeping mind.

Dream Entry Notes

The Cohort should arrive together if possible, though not always standing where they expected. If running for a single Protagonist, the dream may isolate them emotionally rather than physically. If running Cohort Play, let each member notice something different first. Dreamspace is a good place to remind the players that their perspectives are not identical.

Once inside, the dream should feel coherent enough to navigate, but unstable enough that certainty itself becomes suspicious.

The Shape of Elias's Dream

Elias's dreamscape is not one single room or symbolic image. It is layered and changing, but a few motifs should repeat:

- floating staircases that never quite connect correctly
- children's furniture scaled up into looming architecture
- fractured doors in walls, freestanding in air, or hanging in impossible places

- giant toys, some comforting and some grotesque
- faceless shadows moving where memory has failed to give detail
- domestic spaces stitched onto tunnel geometry
- distant hums like portal frames hidden inside lullabies
- little islands of warmth surrounded by large uncertain dark

The visual tone should carry a slightly storybook grotesque quality—eerie rather than purely monstrous, dreamlike without losing shape. Cute things should become unsettling only by being held one second too long in the wrong light.

Do not try to make the dream arbitrary. Let every major image track back to one of the campaign's themes: fear, loneliness, communication, thresholds, unfinished identity, and the dangerous hope that someone on the other side understands.

Scene 1 — The Dream Gate

The Cohort's first challenge is navigational. Elias's dream presents three possible doors or routes forward, each embodying a different emotional truth. Only one leads deeper toward the real center of the dream. The others may loop, mislead, or bring the Cohort into fear-space rather than contact-space.

This is the part's first puzzle scene, but it should feel like reading emotional architecture rather than solving a mechanical riddle.

Read Aloud: The Three Doors

> The first chamber of the dream is impossible in the way dreams rarely bother apologizing for. The floor is a child's bedroom rug stretched wide as a plaza. Above it hangs a dark without ceiling. In front of the Cohort stand three doors, each freestanding, each closed, none attached to a wall.
>
> The first door is brightly painted and sized for a child, but its handle turns slightly on its own as if someone behind it keeps almost deciding to come out.
>
> The second is an ordinary white household door, slightly open, with warm yellow light showing beneath it and the sound of muffled voices beyond —adult voices, arguing softly.
>
> The third is taller, darker, and unpainted, with chalk lines around the frame and a faint pulse in the wood like a heartbeat trying not to be heard.
>
> None of them feel entirely safe.
>
> One of them feels real.

Running the Puzzle

The Cohort must choose the door that "feels real," meaning the route most closely connected to the actual dream-pressure at the center of the campaign.

The correct answer is usually the **third door**: the chalk-marked, pulsing one, tied directly to threshold logic and the hidden communication thread.

The other two lead to useful but dangerous side spaces:

- the painted child's door may lead into play-space, distraction, or a false-safe memory loop
- the lit household door may lead into parental tension, helplessness, and emotional background rather than the core mystery

Characters may use:

- **Intellect** to reason through symbolic consistency
- **Dreamcraft** to read the threshold pressure directly
- **Awareness** to detect which door is "performing" rather than existing
- **Presence** to sense which choice resonates with Elias's real emotional center

Outcomes

If the Cohort chooses well, they proceed cleanly.

If they choose poorly, do not punish them with dead halt. Instead, route them through a short revealing wrong-space first. A wrong door should teach, unsettle, and cost time or emotional clarity. Dream puzzles are better when they deepen atmosphere rather than simply block progress.

Scene 2 — The Child's Fear

Beyond the proper gate—or after detouring through a false path—the Cohort eventually comes upon the first major manifested figure of the dream: **The Tall Smile**.

This is the campaign's most important bait-and-switch scene so far. The Tall Smile has been foreshadowed through drawings and fear-sign. It looks like the thing that ought to be the central antagonist. It is not.

The Tall Smile should appear enormous, too long in limb and silhouette, with a large mouth or grin that appears contrary to the expression in its eyes. But crucially, when the Cohort finally encounters it here in the dream, it is not attacking. It is crying.

Read Aloud: The Tall Smile

> The path opens onto a room that was once probably a hallway, then a closet, then a memory, and has now given up pretending to choose. At the center of it sits a figure so tall it has to stoop under a ceiling that keeps changing its mind.
>
> It is all wrong in the ways children draw fear when the fear has become familiar. Limbs too long. Hands too gentle or too sharp depending on where you stand. A face that should be empty, except for the smile—wide, fixed, impossible, not cruel at first glance but disturbing to look at for too long.

It is sitting on the floor among scattered toys.

And it is crying.

Not loudly. Not dramatically. Just with the exhausted body language of something built from fear that has realized fear is not the same thing as purpose.

Understanding the Tall Smile

This scene is pivotal. The Cohort should be allowed to discover, through observation, Dreamcraft, empathy, or simple courage, that the Tall Smile is **Elias's fear given form**, not the hidden speaker reaching across the threshold.

It is built from:

- fear of abandonment
- fear of dark spaces
- fear of hearing something answer back
- fear of being believed and not believed at once
- the pressure of talking to an unseen "friend" while knowing the adults would panic

The Tall Smile may:

- recoil if attacked, but not fight like an enemy of its apparent scale
- weep black dream-water or shadow residue
- clutch toys, drawings, or broken door-shapes
- point deeper into the dream if treated with gentleness
- briefly mimic Elias's own posture when frightened

The emotional point is this: fear is here, but fear is not the mastermind.

If the Cohort Attacks

If they attack first, the Tall Smile should defend itself in fragmented, miserable ways, but the scene should quickly communicate that they are beating on a symptom. Let the players feel that. Not as punishment, but as revelation.

If the Cohort Approaches Carefully

A calm, empathetic, or Dreamcraft-guided approach may grant:

- a reduction in dream hostility for the next scene
- a clue about Elias's loneliness
- a symbolic route onward
- confirmation that "the other child" is separate from this fear-form

This is an excellent place to reward tenderness in play.

Scene 3 — The Dream Labyrinth

Beyond the Tall Smile lies the deeper structure of Elias's dream: a shifting labyrinth of doors, floating steps, nursery geometry, tunnel echoes, and fractured memory spaces. This section can be run briefly or in extended fashion depending on pacing. It should feel like movement through emotional architecture rather than random dream nonsense.

Recurring details might include:

- school hallways that turn into tunnel ramps
- closet doors opening onto slabs of stone

- toy blocks spelling half-words like **COME**, **DOOR**, **STAY**, or **HOME**
- mirrors that show a second child standing beside Elias where none was present before
- chalk lines drawn by child hands over impossible structural seams
- little islands of warmth like remembered bedtime safety, each surrounded by larger instability

The Cohort should feel by now that the dream has been occupied.

Read Aloud: The Labyrinth Deepens

> The deeper dream does not behave like a place built all at once. It behaves like somewhere rewritten repeatedly by a child trying to make sense of something older than he is.
>
> Stairs hang in the dark without walls. Closet doors open onto tunnel mouths. A row of toys sits waiting on a shelf that has no floor beneath it. Crayon lines run over wood, then stone, then open air, as if the drawing kept going after the paper gave up.
>
> Sometimes the Cohort hears Elias laughing from far away. Sometimes the same laugh comes back colder, slower, and not quite his.
>
> At the edge of one fractured landing, in chalk written by a hand too small and too tired, one sentence appears over and over:
>
> **I made the door so he wouldn't be alone.**

This line should hit hard. It recontextualizes the child's actions not as invitation to evil, but as attempted kindness toward something he believes is lonely.

Scene 4 — The Waking Child

At the deep center of the dream-labyrinth, the Cohort finally sees the second child.

This is the reveal scene. Do not rush it. Do not frame it like a simple villain entrance.

The **Waking Child** should appear pale, translucent, and slightly unfinished—like a dream wearing the memory of a body but not fully convinced by it. His eyes glow with candle-like light. He is child-shaped, but too still in one moment and too fluid in the next. His feet may not quite touch the floor. His outline may weaken near strong emotional symbols. He should feel fragile and dangerous in equal measure, not because he is physically overwhelming, but because he is wrong in a sad way.

Read Aloud: The Waking Child Appears

> At the center of the dream stands another child.
>
> He is not Elias.
>
> He is pale enough to seem made of sleepless light, thin enough that parts of him blur at the edges, and still enough that the entire labyrinth seems to hold its breath around him. His eyes shine like candle flames seen through glass. His clothes—if they are clothes—look half remembered, like the idea of what a child might have worn before the dream forgot the details.
>
> He watches the Cohort without fear.

Not with trust, either.

Just with the old exhausted attention of someone who has been waiting too long to decide whether rescue and harm are different things anymore.

When he speaks, the dream around him listens.

"Bring him to me," he says softly.

"We must be whole."

The Nature of the Waking Child

This is the campaign's key revelation:

- The Waking Child is **not Elias**
- He is **not fully human**
- He is bound somehow to Elias's dream-state
- He is fragmented, unfinished, and reaching toward completion
- His desire is not expressed as destruction, but as reunion

The Cohort should feel uncertain whether to pity him, fear him, oppose him, or all three.

He may answer very little if pressed. He is not here to give a full exposition speech. He is here to state need.

Possible brief interactions:

- He refers to Elias as though they are connected, but not identical
- He says he is cold, alone, or "only half"
- He implies that he did not begin as he is now
- He may glance at the Cohort as though recognizing Limbo, but not belonging to it
- He may seem frightened when asked directly about separation or birth

After his statement, he vanishes—folding backward into the dream, stepping through a chalk seam, dissolving into light, or otherwise leaving in a way that feels less like escape and more like withdrawal.

He should not be fully confrontable yet. That belongs later.

Optional Beat — The Dream Reacts

Once the Waking Child vanishes, the dream may briefly destabilize:

- doors slam
- gravity shifts
- staircases tilt
- a child's cry echoes from somewhere impossible

- the Tall Smile calms and watches from a distance
- the route back begins failing

This provides urgency to the exit without overshadowing the reveal.

End of Part IV — The Need to Act Across Limbo

When the Cohort returns from the dream, they do so with a transformed understanding of the campaign. The Waking Child is real. Elias is tethered to him. The being is not attacking out of simple malice. It wants reunification—whatever that means. That desire is likely what has begun stressing portals across both the Human World and Limbo. The crisis is no longer local.

This sets up Part V perfectly: once the Cohort knows what is happening in the dream, it must deal with the way that dream-pressure is now rippling through the wider realm.

Read Aloud: Closing Beat

> Waking is uglier than entering. The dream lets go reluctantly, as though the Cohort has walked out of a story that had not finished arranging itself around them. The bedroom returns in pieces: blanket edge, window frost half-melted, closet door, dim walls, sleeping child.
>
> Elias is still here. That is the first mercy.
>
> The second is smaller. The Cohort now knows the truth well enough to be frightened by it properly.
>
> There are two children in this story.
> One is human.
> One is not.
> And somewhere between them, across dream and threshold and some older damage no one has yet fully named, a bond is tightening.
>
> Outside the room, Limbo is still waiting.
>
> It will not stay unaffected for long.

Rewards and Advancement Hooks

By the end of Part IV, the Cohort may gain:

- standard **GP** for dream-entry, navigation, and successful revelation
- direct knowledge of the Waking Child
- the understanding that the Tall Smile is fear, not mastermind
- symbolic or practical clues linking Elias and the Waking Child
- possible residue or dream-mark advantage for later confrontations

Key hooks leading into **Part V — The Broken Doors**:

- the Waking Child's desire to become whole
- confirmation that the tether is larger than one room or one portal
- signs that this pressure is beginning to affect other thresholds across Limbo
- the need to secure unstable portals before the realm starts answering the dream-link in dangerous ways

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Creepmaster Notes for Part IV

This part is where the campaign becomes emotionally ambitious. It should not lose its eerie fun, but it should gain real pathos. The players should leave the dream with the uncomfortable

sense that the central supernatural figure is suffering as much as it is threatening. That tension is vital to the final confrontation later.

Also, keep dream imagery readable. Strange is good. Random is useless. Let doors, toys, staircases, shadows, and drawings repeat meaningfully. Let the dream teach the players what it is before it teaches them what it wants.

The next part expands outward again. The mystery is no longer hidden. Now Limbo itself begins to answer it.

Part V — The Broken Doors

Part Summary

By now the Cohort knows enough to be afraid properly.

The child in the dream is real, or real enough to matter. Elias is tethered to him. The Waking Child wants completion, not conquest, but want can still break a world if it reaches hard enough through the wrong boundaries. That reach has now started to show. Across Limbo, portals are flickering, opening at the wrong emotional angle, answering to dream-residue they should never have learned to hear, or whispering with the same unfinished pressure the Cohort felt in Elias's dream.

Part V is the campaign's widening spiral. The mystery leaves the room and enters the realm.

The Cohort must move through multiple unstable sites, securing collapsing thresholds, reading emotional residue, recovering records, and gathering the final historical truth about the Waking Child. This part is flexible in structure by design. It should feel like emergency fieldwork across several regions of Limbo, with each stop revealing a different face of the same problem. The Creepmaster may choose any three affected locations, as suggested in the original campaign outline, or adapt them to the campaign's preferred geography and prior route play.

The crucial outcome of this part is not only stabilization. It is understanding. By the end of Part V, the Cohort should know that the Waking Child was not born cleanly, but **fragmented**—one half entangled with a human child's dream, the other stranded in a liminal dream-state near the aftermath of an old threshold catastrophe. What now looks like invasion is, from his point of view, a desperate attempt to stop being incomplete.

That does not make the danger smaller. It makes it sadder.

Primary Objective

Secure a series of unstable portals across Limbo before the Waking Child's influence pushes them into full rupture.

Secondary Objective

Uncover the true origin of the Waking Child and the history of his tether to Elias.

Creepmaster Goals for Part V

This part should:

- widen the campaign's scale without losing emotional focus
- show that the portal problem is no longer local
- make Limbo feel strained, reactive, and increasingly unstable
- reveal the Waking Child's origin through scattered records and residue
- build urgency toward the final confrontation
- force the Cohort to decide whether this is now a rescue, a containment operation, or both

Part V should feel like movement under pressure. The Cohort is no longer quietly investigating. It is trying to stop a spreading condition while piecing together the truth fast enough to matter.

Opening Situation

After the Cohort's return from Elias's dream, the case can no longer remain local. Reports begin coming in from other districts and routes: unstable

thresholds, collapsing door-seams, dream pressure in unlikely places, frightened witnesses, and portals behaving as though they are listening for a name. The Vigil may not yet understand the pattern, but the Cohort does. Or at least, it understands enough to know that this is the same crisis wearing several new faces.

This opening should feel like the moment the emergency map lights all switch from concerning to insulting.

Read Aloud: The Spreading Instability

> The first report is easy to dismiss. The second is not. By the third, no one in the room is pretending coincidence still deserves a chair.
>
> A route threshold in one district pulses with dream-residue and begins opening half a second before the keyed sigil is spoken. A fungal road in another sector grows quiet, then fills with children's chalk marks no one admits to drawing. A shrine passage in a third region starts humming Elias's name in a voice no one can agree was really there.
>
> All across Limbo, doors are learning the same bad habit.
>
> They are beginning to listen.
>
> The case is no longer a house, a room, or a child's dream in isolation. It is now a pattern, and patterns in Limbo do not improve from neglect. The realm is not breaking yet. It is leaning.
>
> Which is often how breakage introduces itself.

Structuring Part V

This part is best run as **three connected field operations**, each in a different region or route zone. The Cohort may choose the order, or the Creepmaster may assign priorities depending on campaign pace. Each operation should contain:

- one unstable portal or threshold site
- one active local complication
- one clue about the Waking Child's origin
- one choice between speed, safety, and information

For consistency with your existing Gazetteer material, I would recommend drawing from:

- the **Shadowed Tunnels** near the Great Cavern's lower approach
- the **Spiral Roots** in the Fungal Forests
- a **Deep Liminal** or **Hollow Seam–adjacent threshold approach** near the Dream-Drip Crevasses

That gives the best tonal spread: tunnel dread, fungal life-pressure, and fringe-Astral instability.

Operation One — The Shadowed Tunnels Reopened

This revisit should not feel repetitive. The route is worse now. What was once a confined disturbance has become a sympathetic strain point, as though the tunnels remember the Cohort's earlier passage and resent being asked to behave again.

The goal here is to stabilize a collapsing threshold node before it tears open into a full dream-fed spill.

Read Aloud: Return to the Tunnels

> The Shadowed Tunnels were never good company. Now they are actively offended.
>
> The walls sweat in cold patches. Chalk marks from the earlier mission have bled into long pale drags as though the stone itself has been trying to rewrite them in its sleep. The echoes are worse than before—less delayed, more selective. Some words come back. Others do not.
>
> The failing threshold ahead is visible before it is reached. Not by light, but by wrongness. The tunnel seems to pinch around it. Dust hangs there in a slow turning ring. Every few breaths, a pulse runs through the passage like a child on the far side of a wall pressing both hands flat against it.

The Situation

The portal node here is not fully open, but it is collapsing rhythmically in time with dream-pressure surges. If left alone, it will produce a breach wide enough for nightmare-things or liminal corruption to pour into the surrounding route network.

The Cohort must:

- secure the site
- prevent hostile incursion
- gather residue or records before the node is sealed

Possible Threat

Choose one or more:

- **Dream-Spirit**
- **Fear Elemental**
- **Shadowmass**
- a familiar creature altered by dream-link strain

These entities should not feel random. They should behave as if attracted to, fed by, or partially formed through the instability.

Clue at the Site

Among old route records or embedded residue, the Cohort can recover the first major historical clue:

> A damaged Vigil note or route archive fragment indicating that during the **Neon Wake Event**, a dream-being was recorded but not successfully recovered —"fragmented during threshold rupture; one portion unaccounted for, one trace linked to Human World sleep-pattern."

This should be the first suggestion that the Waking Child was not born yesterday. He is old damage.

Operation Two — The Spiral Roots

The second site should feel alive in exactly the way the Shadowed Tunnels did not. The **Spiral Roots** are deep, organic, and already symbolically rich. Portal instability there should feel less like rupture and more like overgrowth: dream-pressure moving through living route architecture, turning root and fungal path into a listening structure.

This operation can emphasize community, ritual, and careful movement.

Read Aloud: The Spiral Roots Disturbance

> The Spiral Roots should feel old, slow, and rooted in themselves. Today they feel distracted.

> The great descending paths hum faintly underfoot. Root-lanterns gutter blue at the edges. In places, chalk lines appear on bark where no chalk should hold. In others, little child-hand spirals have been pressed into soft fungal skin and left to dry there, as if someone has been teaching the grove to remember a pattern it never asked to learn.
>
> The local keepers are frightened in the practical way of people who know exactly how much trouble a place can survive before it becomes legend.

The Situation

A route-shrine or living threshold spiral is destabilizing. The Cohort must either:

- perform a proper calming rite
- physically secure and cut back the spread
- negotiate with local shrine-keepers or fungal tenders for the correct ritual access
- or some combination of the above

This is a good place to use **Quiet the Realm** if you want the system integration to matter in the campaign.

The instability manifests through:

- emotional residue in the roots
- dreamlike repetition of children's chalk spirals
- fungal bloom responding to Elias's sleeping distress
- low-grade openings that do not fully form into doors but almost do

Possible Threat

Choose one:

- **Fear Elemental**
- **Corrupted Fey**
- a locally altered **Night-Between** presence
- or a non-combat threat such as living route backlash

The danger here should not simply be "fight a creature." It should be "stop the region from learning the wrong pattern."

Clue at the Site

Here the Cohort may find a **Scryer's diary**, root-bound record, or shrine memory preserving the second major truth:

> "Two children. One sleeping. One unmade. The breach did not create a monster cleanly. It divided a single dream-event across worlds. One half clothed itself in human memory. One half was left reaching."

This is the first direct articulation that Elias and the Waking Child may be **tethered halves of one broken liminal event**, not merely a human child and an attached visitor.

That is a terrible thing to learn.

Operation Three — Deep Liminal / The Edgeward Threshold

The final site in Part V should feel like a warning that the campaign is nearly ready for its climax. Use an edge-zone threshold, Deep Liminal site, or Hollow Seam–adjacent route where the dream-

pressure has reached a place too close to the Astral for comfort.

This operation should feel dangerous, sparse, and structurally wrong. It is not a neighborhood problem anymore. It is a frontier problem.

Read Aloud: Edgeward Instability

> The third site stands too near the wrong edge of Limbo for anyone to use the word "routine" without being mocked by the stone itself.
>
> The threshold platform hangs over a fracture cut where the air tastes thin and silver. Marker crystals flicker. Tether lines creak without wind. Dream-shards turn slowly in the space beyond the railing as though considering whether gravity still deserves obedience.
>
> At the center of the platform, the portal frame is not merely unstable. It is yearning.
>
> Every few moments it opens a slit of light—not enough for passage, just enough for a voice to nearly happen.

The Situation

The Cohort must stabilize or shut down a threshold node under fringe-Astral conditions. This should be the hardest of the three operations, not simply because of enemies, but because the environment itself is unreliable.

Possible complications:

- gravity shifts
- psychic winds
- falling marker stones
- vision bleed from the dream-link
- the sensation that speaking Elias's name aloud strengthens the instability

Possible Threat

Choose one:

- **Shadowmass**
- **Dream-Spirit**
- **Night-Between elite scout**
- or a multi-phase environmental crisis with light hostile pressure

This scene should feel like the realm itself is under strain now, not just one house or one tunnel.

Final Clue at the Site

This operation should reveal the last and clearest clue before the finale. It may come through portal imprint, old record crystal, Scryer notation, or the threshold itself briefly speaking what it has been hearing.

The message should be simple, haunting, and repetitive:

> **Bring him through. Bring him through. Bring him through.**

Or, if you want a fuller archival clue attached:

> "The Neon Wake did not end cleanly. A child's dream and a breached liminal construct fused under stress. One self remained anchored to mortal sleep. One self continued incomplete. Reunification risk: catastrophic. Continued separation risk: escalating threshold resonance."

That gives the Cohort the final shape of the dilemma.

The Truth of the Waking Child

By the end of the three operations, the Cohort should be able to piece together the following:

The Waking Child was likely created during the **Neon Wake Event**, an earlier Human World–side threshold catastrophe. In that event, dream pressure, portal rupture, and the sleeping mind of a child became entangled. The result was not one stable being. It was a **fracture**.

One side remained anchored to mortal life. That side became **Elias**—or at least the child who inherited or continued the human half of the event. The other side persisted in dream-liminal incompletion. That side became what the Cohort now knows as the **Waking Child**.

This is why he does not want to destroy Limbo.

He wants to stop being half.

The problem, of course, is that making himself whole may tear Elias out of the Human World, destabilize the connected dream-portal structure, and crack several route systems open in the process.

That is not villainy.
It is still unacceptable.

Read Aloud: The Truth Settles

> Piece by piece, route by route, the shape of it becomes harder to deny. What began as a flickering door and a frightened child's drawing now stands exposed as something older and crueler in the cosmic sense: not a plot, not a haunting, but a break that never healed properly.
>
> The Waking Child is not simply reaching across the threshold. He is reaching toward himself.
>
> Elias was never just being watched. He was the other side of the wound.
>
> Around Limbo, doors are straining because the thing caught between them has finally learned enough to ask for what was taken.
>
> And it is asking in the only way a broken dream-being can.
>
> By pulling every threshold it can hear toward the same unfinished answer.

End of Part V — The Portal Nexus

Once the three field operations conclude, all roads point toward the final confrontation. The instability across Limbo is not random; it is converging. The Cohort now has enough information to understand that there is likely one place where the connection between Elias and the Waking Child has become strongest: a nexus between Limbo and Elias's dream, where the reunion attempt will either complete, fail, or be forced into some third shape by intervention.

This is the beginning of Part VI.

Read Aloud: Closing Beat

> The reports do not stop. They narrow.
>
> The realm is no longer simply suffering scattered strain. It is being pulled toward a center. Portal after portal, route after route, dream mark after dream mark, everything bends toward the same pressure point like filings toward a hidden magnet.

> Somewhere ahead, there is a place where Elias's dream and Limbo are no longer brushing at the edges. They are meeting.
>
> Not politely.
> Not safely.
> But undeniably.
>
> That is where the Cohort will have to go next.
>
> Whatever answer this story allows, it will not be found in another archive, another tunnel, or another frightened witness.
>
> It will be found at the center.
>
> Where the child waits.
>
> And where the other child has already decided he cannot remain half any longer.

Rewards and Advancement Hooks

By the end of Part V, the Cohort may gain:

- standard **GP** for multi-site stabilization, field operations, and historical discovery
- regional gratitude, Vigil standing, or shrine trust depending on how the operations were handled
- preserved clue materials useful in the finale
- possible local allies willing to assist the final operation
- a much clearer moral and tactical understanding of the final conflict

The direct hook into **Part VI — The Waking Child** is now complete:

- the Waking Child is real
- Elias is tethered to him
- the reunion attempt is imminent
- the portal nexus is forming or has already formed
- whatever happens next will either stabilize the damage, freeze it, or worsen it into disaster

---

Creepmaster Notes for Part V

This part should feel broad, but not diffuse. Every operation must still feel connected to Elias and the Waking Child, not like a random side quest through regional portals. The widening scale should increase dread, not dilute focus.

You should also begin setting up the final emotional ambiguity. The Cohort is not marching to kill a cackling villain. It is moving toward a broken being making a desperate claim on wholeness. That should matter. The best final scene will depend on the players feeling the weight of that truth before they decide what to do with it.

The next part is the climax. It should feel both inevitable and terrible.

Part VI — The Waking Child

Part Summary

All the roads now lead inward.

The portal fluctuations, the wrong chalk marks, the child's drawings, the missing Truant, the dream-labyrinth, the spreading threshold strain across Limbo—everything has narrowed toward one point of crisis: a **Portal Nexus** where Elias's dream and Limbo are no longer touching by accident, but actively trying to merge around the broken bond between Elias and the Waking Child.

This is not a conventional final battle in the simple sense. There will be combat. There will be guardians. There will be environmental hazards, collapsing dream-geometry, unstable gravity, and enough threshold pressure to ruin a week at the administrative level alone. But the true conflict is not merely "defeat the boss." The Cohort must decide what to do with a being that is dangerous, unstable, and deeply sympathetic. The Waking Child is not trying to conquer the world. He is trying to stop being incomplete. The problem is that his answer may destroy Elias, rupture portions of Limbo, and turn a deeply personal tragedy into a realm-scale disaster.

That is why this finale matters.

The Cohort must stop the forced merger, stabilize the dream-threshold nexus, and choose what sort of ending this story deserves: healing, severance, containment, or failure. Each path should feel costly. Each path should feel earned.

This final part works best if the Creepmaster remembers one central truth: the Waking Child is at his most dangerous precisely because he is not evil in any simple sense. He is a child-shaped being of liminal fracture and unfinished yearning. He wants home. He wants selfhood. He wants the pain to stop. Those desires are understandable. They are also opening reality.

Primary Objective

Stop the Waking Child from merging with Elias in a way that would shatter or dangerously destabilize the Dream-Limbo boundary.

Secondary Objective

Stabilize the Portal Nexus before its collapse spreads further into Limbo and the Human World.

Creepmaster Goals for Part VI

This final mission should:

- feel larger and stranger than the previous parts, but still emotionally personal
- present real danger through guardians, environmental instability, and dream-logic collapse
- allow multiple valid approaches: combat, ritual, persuasion, repair, escort, severance
- make Elias matter as a child, not just a mystical device
- make the Waking Child feel pitiable and frightening at once
- provide an ending that reflects player choices rather than punishing them for not guessing a "correct" moral answer

The finale should be operatic by **CREEPS!** standards, but never lose the setting's intimate scale. Even if the nexus is full of floating doors and reality is behaving like a story with a fever, the heart of the scene is still two children and the Cohort trying to decide what kind of rescue is possible.

The Portal Nexus

The Portal Nexus exists at the convergence point between Elias's dream architecture and Limbo's threshold structure. It may be reached through a prepared route, a collapsing threshold chain, a dream-entry ritual amplified by prior clue work, or a combination of all three. It should feel less like a place someone built and more like a place forced into existence by two realities trying too hard to overlap.

This is the campaign's grandest visual environment. Use it.

Floating doors circle through the dark at different heights and angles. Dream-shards spin in slow constellations. Stair fragments climb nowhere. Inverted gravity pulls loose objects sideways. Wind moves in whispers, repeating Elias's name from different distances and emotional tones. Pieces of household architecture drift among Limbo stone—bedroom molding, closet frames, rug edges, tunnel braces, lamp-light, and the pale chalk geometry of childish efforts to "draw the door right."

Nothing there is stable. Everything there is meaningful.

Read Aloud: Arrival at the Nexus

> The route into the nexus does not open so much as surrender.
>
> Stone, chalk, dream-light, and old threshold force peel apart at the same time, revealing a vast suspended wound of space where Limbo and a child's sleeping mind have met too often and too deeply to separate cleanly anymore.
>
> Doors drift in the air at impossible angles, some open onto darkness, some onto bedrooms, some onto tunnel mouths, some onto memories too brief to hold. Dream-shards turn in slow arcs around a broken center. Gravity is a rumor. A staircase hangs upside down above a field of floating toys. Somewhere far below—or above, or beside—the sound of a child crying comes and goes with the wind.
>
> And the wind speaks only one name.
>
> **Elias**.
>
> Again.
>
> Again.
>
> Again.
>
> The place is not merely unstable. It is expectant.

Environmental Effects

Throughout the finale, the Creepmaster may invoke the following nexus effects as pressure:

- floating debris or door fragments obstruct movement
- sudden gravity shifts force **Grace** or **Athletics** tests
- dream-whispers unsettle concentration
- symbolic overlap causes a past clue or fear-image to manifest physically
- ritual work suffers interference unless anchored carefully
- stray dream-pulses may affect Elias's state directly

Do not overuse these at random. The best approach is to let the environment respond to emotional spikes or major phase shifts.

Phase 1 — The Nightmare Guardians

Before the Cohort can reach the Waking Child directly, it must pass through the final defensive layer of the nexus: the **Nightmare Guardians**. These may be interpreted as entities summoned by the nexus, creations of accumulated dream-protection, or half-willing defenders responding to the Waking Child's need. They are not there because the Waking Child is a cackling mastermind. They are there because the dream has learned to defend the wound.

Use **2–4 guardians**, scaled to party size and campaign difficulty. They should feel stronger than previous nightmare creatures, but still clearly secondary to the true emotional center of the scene.

Possible visual forms:

- elongated shadow-things with nursery-toy elements fused into them
- door-faced guardians whose torsos open into wrong rooms
- stitched fear-constructs made from chalk, cloth, and black dream dust
- heavy faceless forms whose movements resemble the Tall Smile's silhouette, but lack its sorrow

Read Aloud: The Guardians Stir

> The first sign is not a roar or a charge. It is the doors slowing.
>
> One by one, the floating frames around the nexus turn inward as though all of them have just noticed the Cohort at once. From their openings, from the spaces between them, from the dark folds beneath the drifting stair fragments, shapes begin to gather.
>
> They are not born cleanly. They assemble. Chalk on shadow. toy-limbs on bad memory. Hollow nursery-song sounds inside bodies not meant to carry them.
>
> The nexus is protecting something.
>
> Unfortunately, it has terrible taste in methods.

Running the Encounter

This should be a serious but not overlong fight. The point is to tax the Cohort, force movement through unstable terrain, and make clear that reaching the center will require effort. You may add objectives beyond simple defeat:

- keep the guardians away from Elias's suspended dream-presence
- prevent them from damaging ritual anchors
- hold a path open long enough for a Dreamcraft or Sorcery action
- protect one Cohort member performing nexus stabilization

This phase is also a good place to let prior campaign elements pay off:

- clues from earlier parts might allow the Cohort to identify weak points
- the Tall Smile, if treated kindly in Part IV, might briefly suppress one guardian
- preserved ritual notes or residue might reduce environmental pressure

Tone Note

This fight should still feel like **CREEPS!**. There is room for horror, but also for absurdity under pressure: dueling on a floating bedroom door, a

nightmare guardian being brained with a toy chest lid, a shouted tactical command interrupted because the floor has decided not to remain a floor.

Phase 2 — The Waking Child

Once the guardians are overcome, bypassed, or held at bay, the Cohort reaches the broken center of the nexus. There, at the point where dream-light and threshold fracture overlap most strongly, stands the Waking Child.

Elias may be present nearby in suspended dream-form, sleeping body logic, or a vulnerable symbolic manifestation depending on how you want the scene staged. The important thing is that the two are near enough now that the threatened merger feels immediate.

This is the part of the climax where the campaign asks what sort of game it has really been.

Read Aloud: The Waking Child at the Center

> At the center of the nexus, where the drifting doors circle widest and the light hurts to look at directly, stands the Waking Child.
>
> He is clearer now than before. That is not a comfort. The more defined he becomes, the more obvious his incompleteness looks. One side of his face is almost fully real. The other flickers with soft erasures, as though memory keeps failing to finish him. Candlelight burns in his eyes. His hands open and close once, slowly, like someone preparing to hold something they have wanted for far too long.
>
> Nearby—too nearby—Elias hangs in sleep-light and dream-thread, not floating exactly, but held. Protected. Called.
>
> The Waking Child looks at the Cohort with something worse than hatred.
>
> Hope.
>
> "You came," he says.
>
> Then, looking past them, toward Elias:
>
> "Now let me stop hurting."

The Waking Child in the Finale

The Cohort may choose any of several broad approaches here:

- direct combat
- persuasion or emotional intervention
- ritual stabilization and repair
- severing the bond
- escorting Elias away while holding the Waking Child off
- trying to reunify them safely
- containing the Waking Child within a Limbo-side vessel or holding structure

This should not be an illusion of choice. The scene must genuinely support different endings.

The Waking Child is dangerous here because:

- his emotional state affects the nexus
- his desperation sharpens threshold strain
- he may unintentionally lash out if prevented
- he can manipulate the space around him instinctively

- he is strong enough to destabilize doors, gravity, and dream-forms nearby

But he should never feel like a cackling final boss. He is confused, fragmented, and at the edge of a terrible answer.

Possible Actions by the Waking Child

Depending on how the Cohort approaches, he may:

- cry out and cause the doors to surge inward
- pull dream-thread tighter around Elias
- beg, threaten, or bargain in child-language that sounds older than it should
- insist that Elias is lonely too
- claim that separation is what caused all of this
- recoil if someone offers genuine repair rather than suppression
- become briefly violent if he believes the Cohort means to erase him

This is where prior emotional work pays off. If the players have treated Elias, the Tall Smile, and dream clues with care, they should have better footing now.

Optional Phase 3 — The Tall Smile Returns

If desired, the **Tall Smile** may return in the final phase—not as an enemy, but as a transformed or clarified part of Elias's emotional truth. Where earlier it embodied fear, here it may appear calm, smaller, gentler, or simply no longer monstrous in quite the same way. It can act as:

- a shield for Elias
- a stabilizing emotional symbol
- an indication that Elias's fear has changed shape
- a sign that the child's heart is still present in the scene and not wholly overwhelmed

This optional phase works especially well if the Cohort showed compassion in Part IV.

Read Aloud: The Tall Smile Returns

> The shadow near Elias gathers again. For one awful second it seems the nightmare shape has come back for its due. Then it steps forward into the light and something about it is different.
>
> It is still tall. Still wrong in some angles. Still wearing that unbearable smile. But now the smile looks less like threat and more like the crude faithful shape a child once gave to something too large to understand. The fear is still there. So is the love under it.
>
> It places itself between Elias and the collapsing doors.
>
> It does not look at the Cohort.
>
> It looks at the other child.

This is not required. Use it only if it strengthens the emotional truth of your table's play.

Resolution Paths

The finale should resolve according to player action, not by secret predetermined answer. The following paths are the most natural outcomes.

Resolution A — Reunification

The Cohort helps Elias and the Waking Child merge safely, or as safely as possible.

This should require a combination of:

- emotional trust or persuasion
- Dreamcraft or ritual stabilization
- protective action around Elias
- willingness to risk a transformation rather than insist on total separation

This is the most hopeful ending, but it should not feel easy or consequence-free. The Cohort is not "letting the monster win." It is choosing healing in a case where healing may still look frightening.

Outcome:
The nexus calms. The doors slow. Elias survives. The Waking Child ceases to exist as a separate fragmented being because he has become integrated properly. Elias may retain faint astral sensitivity, strange dreams, or future Sight, but he sleeps peacefully for the first time in a very long while.

Read Aloud: Reunification

> The moment of joining is not violent. That is what makes it so frightening at first.
>
> The light around the two children pulls inward, not outward. Chalk lines fade. The doors stop straining. The whispering wind drops from a thousand voices to one long breath. The Waking Child reaches, Elias answers, and for one terrible instant the whole nexus looks like it is deciding whether healing and rupture are secretly the same thing.
>
> Then the strain breaks the right way.
>
> Not into pieces. Into stillness.
>
> Where there were two, there is now one sleeping child, weeping softly in his dreams but no longer alone in them. Around him, Limbo's wounded doors settle back into themselves like old bones remembering the correct shape.

Aftermath Hooks:
Elias may become a recurring human-side sensitive. The Cohort may be remembered as the ones who did the impossible correctly. Some Vigil factions may be deeply uncomfortable with this outcome.

Resolution B — Separation

The Cohort severs the bond between Elias and the Waking Child, preventing merger but destroying or dispersing the fragmented dream-being.

This is cleaner tactically and sadder emotionally. It may be chosen because the Cohort does not trust reunification, lacks the means to stabilize it, or believes Elias's safety must come first at any cost.

Outcome:
The Waking Child breaks apart into dream-light, ash, or star-dust. Elias survives, but the part of the connection that carried the other child is gone. He may retain faint astral awareness, strange memory gaps, or the sorrow of a loss he cannot name.

Read Aloud: Separation

> The severing does not sound like a sword stroke or a spell detonation. It sounds like a child stopping in the middle of a sentence because no one on the other end is there anymore.

The Waking Child looks surprised first. Then tired. Then almost relieved. The candlelight in his eyes thins to pale dust. His outline loosens, unthreads, and scatters into the dream-wind in a thousand tiny drifting lights.

Elias gasps once in his sleep like someone surfacing from deep water.

The doors slam shut all at once.

When the stillness comes after, it is clean.

It is also lonelier than before.

Aftermath Hooks:
Elias may remain touched by the event. The Cohort may question whether it saved him or simply chose the survivable sorrow. This is an excellent ending if you want bittersweet finality.

Resolution C — Containment

The Cohort neither merges nor destroys the Waking Child. Instead, it contains him within Limbo using ritual, vessel, barrier, or stabilized threshold imprisonment.

This is the most cautious and perhaps the most politically acceptable ending for parts of the Vigil. It is also the most obviously temporary.

Outcome:
The nexus closes enough to prevent immediate catastrophe. Elias survives. The Waking Child remains intact but confined in a bubble, chamber, dream-vault, or containment structure in Limbo. He is no longer reaching freely, but he still exists.

Read Aloud: Containment

The containment does not heal anything. It merely convinces the disaster to stay in one room.

Sigils lock. Light bends inward. The floating doors freeze where they hang, then fold one by one into hard still angles around the center. The Waking Child beats once against the forming barrier—not with rage, but with the desperate disbelief of someone who has been promised answer and given delay instead.

Elias falls free of the thread and drops back into ordinary sleep.

Around the Cohort, the nexus steadies. Not kindly. Not permanently. Just enough.

The wound is closed.

It is not healed.

Aftermath Hooks:
This ending is perfect if you want future missions. The Waking Child can become a recurring Limbo-side figure, political issue, or ongoing moral burden.

Resolution D — Failure

The Cohort fails to stop the forced crossing. Elias passes through unprotected, or the nexus ruptures before a stable solution is imposed.

This should not be the “bad ending” because the players chose the wrong moral philosophy. It should result only from real failure, collapse, or deliberate campaign pivot. If used, it should feel like the opening of a new arc, not a punishment screen.

Outcome:
Elias crosses. Limbo destabilizes. The Waking Child gains his answer, but in the worst possible structure. The Cohort survives into a rescue campaign, recovery arc, or post-breach catastrophe story.

Read Aloud: Failure

> The final pull happens too fast and too personally to look grand. One moment Elias is there, held in sleep-light. The next the dream-thread jerks hard, the doors around the nexus open like a thousand mouths, and the child is gone from the place where the world expected him to remain.
>
> The Waking Child cries out—not in triumph, but in shock. Even he did not want it like this.
>
> The nexus ruptures. Limbo answers with every bad sound it owns.
>
> By the time the Cohort can see clearly again, the doors are broken, the wind is screaming, and somewhere ahead in the dark there is now a human child in the wrong world.
>
> The mission is over.
>
> The rescue has begun.

Aftermath Hooks:
Immediate sequel arc. This path is excellent if you want the campaign to continue into a larger rescue-and-repair story.

Final Scene — Waking

With all resolutions other than D, the final emotional beat should return the story to Elias's room, or some Human World waking-space equivalent. The campaign began with a flickering household door. It should end, in some form, with a child waking.

Read Aloud: The Morning After

> Morning comes with all the ordinary noises the Cohort has learned to distrust and love in equal measure: pipes settling, floorboards murmuring, a kettle starting somewhere downstairs, the mild domestic comedy of a house trying to be a house again.
>
> Elias wakes slowly.
>
> The room is just a room now, or close enough that only trained eyes would argue. The closet is shut. The drawings still hang on the wall. The light through the curtain is pale and human and unfairly normal.
>
> He blinks, sits up, and looks toward the dark corner where he used to speak to someone no one else could hear.
>
> (Then he says one of two things.
>
> Either: "He's gone."
>
> Or: "I'm not alone anymore."
>
> Depending on what the Cohort has chosen, both may mean mercy.)

Rewards and Campaign Aftermath

At the conclusion of Part VI, the Cohort should receive:

- standard **GP** for the finale, likely toward the high end of your award scale

- lasting reputation, favor, or consequence from the Vigil, shrines, or involved local factions
- an enduring relationship to Elias, if he survives and remains aware in any degree
- possible access to rare dream or threshold knowledge
- a changed emotional standing within Limbo, depending on whether the Cohort healed, severed, or contained the problem

Long-Term Consequences by Ending

Reunification creates a living human-side sensitive and proof that some liminal fractures can be healed rather than merely contained.

Separation restores order but leaves grief in the structure of the story. It is a stable ending with emotional cost.

Containment preserves maximum future utility and maximum future trouble.

Failure opens an entirely new campaign phase.

Creepmaster Notes for Part VI

The hardest thing in this finale is resisting the urge to flatten the Waking Child into a simple villain once initiative starts. Don't do that. Let him be dangerous, unstable, and consequential—but keep the sadness visible. The campaign becomes much stronger if, even at the point of highest peril, the players feel that "defeat the enemy" is only one possible interpretation of what they are doing.

Also, remember Elias. It is easy in a surreal nexus scene full of floating doors and nightmare guardians to let the child become abstract. He must not. The players should still feel that there is a sleeping boy at the center of this, and that what they choose is about him as much as about Limbo.

Finally, let the setting remain itself, even at climax. There is room for awe. There is room for dread. There is even room for one final, very **CREEPS!** image of someone shouting field instructions while standing sideways on a drifting closet door in a storm of dream-chalk and emotional consequences.

That is still the right game.

Campaign Closing Note

Shadows of the Waking Child begins with a flickering door and ends with a question: when something is born broken between worlds, is the answer repair, mercy, refusal, or containment?

The Cohort cannot avoid choosing. That is what makes the story matter.

Shadows of the Waking Child NPCs & Adversaries

Corrupted Fey

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Thorn Blade, Glamour Lash, or Claw — 1d6+1

Corrupted Fey are not merely hostile fae. They are fae-adjacent beings whose glamour, courtesy, and symbolic grace have been warped by dream-rot, bad thresholds, emotional corruption, or long exposure to broken portal spaces. They tend to appear elegant at first glance, but wrong in the details: antlers growing from places they should not, smiles too fixed to trust, limbs bending with the soft delay of bad puppetry, voices arriving a half-breath after the mouth moves. Their clothing often looks ceremonial, but torn, water-stained, root-grown, or threaded through with black chalk residue and dream dust.

In play, Corrupted Fey work best as threshold opportunists, edge-predators, or eerie regional complications rather than simple bruisers. They still carry traces of old etiquette and symbolic instinct, which makes them unsettling in a very particular way. They may bow before attacking, speak politely while lying, or offer "safe passage" in a tone that suggests the word has recently been redefined.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Warped Glamour:** Once per scene, a Corrupted Fey may impose **Disadvantage** on an enemy's next Awareness or social-reading test by bending appearance, posture, or emotional impression.
• **Dream-Tainted Step:** They ignore minor difficult terrain in root-grown, overgrown, or symbolically unstable locations.
• **Cold Iron Aversion:** Worked iron, depending on the campaign's local fae rules, may impose **-10** on their attacks, glamour use, or confidence in close quarters.
• **Threshold Sensitivity:** They are often drawn toward bad portals, dream-thin places, and emotionally unstable routes.

Dream-Spirit

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Dream-Touch or Psychic Pulse — 1d6 psychic

Dream-Spirits are beings of sleep-pressure, symbolic drift, and emotional residue given just enough shape to become inconvenient. Some appear as translucent children, some as soft-lit animals, some as drifting figures made of curtain-light, chalk dust, or memory-fog. None remain visually stable for long. They are often beautiful at first glance and increasingly unnerving the longer one studies them.

These spirits are not always malicious, but they are rarely harmless. They embody or carry pieces of dream logic into waking or threshold space, and they tend to distort mood, memory, and attention simply by being present. Around a Dream-Spirit, people may remember the wrong bedroom, feel homesick for places they never lived, or become briefly convinced they are on the verge of understanding something that should absolutely remain unclear.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Intangible Drift:** Non-magical physical attacks usually suffer **Disadvantage** unless the spirit is anchored, cornered, or forced into stronger manifestation.
• **Psychic Pressure:** A successful attack may impose **-10** on the target's next composure,

concentration, or clarity-based action.
• **Dream-Sense**: Dream-Spirits are drawn to sleeping minds, active thresholds, and high emotional residue.
• **Not Entirely Hostile**: Some may be calmed, redirected, or questioned rather than destroyed, especially by Dreamcraft or careful symbolic action.

Fear Elemental

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Panic Surge or Fear-Claw — 1d6 psychic

A Fear Elemental is what happens when fright stops being an emotion and starts renting a body. These beings vary in shape depending on the fear that birthed them: a ragged black knot of eyes and breath, a long-limbed corner-thing, a mass of half-heard whisper and claw, or a child-sized figure wearing the outline of safety badly. They rarely move normally. They arrive in jerks, pulses, or room-length shifts that feel more like emotional acceleration than locomotion.

Fear Elementals do not simply injure. They amplify. They make staircases feel longer, doors less trustworthy, and brave plans suddenly seem theoretical. Their presence thickens dread in the air, often turning a manageable scene into one where everyone feels one breath from acting stupidly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Aura of Dread**: Creatures at Close range may suffer **–10** on fear resistance, composure, or calm concentration tests.
• **Emotion-Fed**: A Fear Elemental grows more aggressive when panic, despair, or helplessness is already present in the scene.
• **Unstable Form**: It may ignore one minor physical consequence per scene if the surrounding fear remains strong.
• **Dream Vulnerability**: Dreamcraft, calming rites, or emotional stabilization may weaken it as effectively as weapons.

Fearling Swarm

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Swarm Nip or Panic Bite — 1d4

Fearlings are tiny, mean, half-formed little parasites of fright. In swarms they appear like a roomful of bad ideas given teeth: skittering shadow-pups, whisper-mouthed toy-things, black insect shapes with child-eye reflections, or pale grub-like entities that vanish if stared at directly and reappear the moment someone stops being brave. They are not individually impressive. They are collectively awful.

Fearling Swarms do not kill with raw force unless a victim is already compromised. They wear at nerve, spread startle reactions, and make concentration difficult. They are ideal for under-bed incursions, nursery breaches, dream-littered hallways, and scenes where panic is the real danger.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Swarm Agitation**: Targets attacked by the swarm often suffer **–10** on the next delicate, concentration-based, or fear resistance test.
• **Cramped Space Advantage**: In bedrooms, vents, cluttered rooms, toy piles, and under-furniture zones, they gain Advantage on concealment and repositioning.
• **Startle Burst**: Once per scene, they may erupt from cover in a sudden cloud, forcing nearby targets to test Awareness or lose their next clean action.

• **Easily Dispersed, Hard to Finish**: Bright light, sweeping blows, and fire may break a swarm quickly, though survivors often regroup if fear remains high.

Nightmare Guardian

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Dream-Blade, Crushing Limb, or Door-Slam — 1d8

Nightmare Guardians are defensive constructs formed from accumulated dream-protection, fear architecture, and threshold stress. They are not elegant beings. They are assembled ones. A guardian may look like a stitched-together soldier made from children's chalk, nursery wood, black doorframes, and shadow mass, or like an oversized faceless protector with toybox ribs and hands that open into wrong rooms. They do not feel alive in the ordinary sense. They feel purposed.

These entities are most likely to appear around major dream nodes, child-threshold nexus points, or the heart of a symbolic crisis where the dream itself has started trying to defend what it cannot understand. They are dangerous because they are stubborn, territorial, and hard to distract once active.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Threshold Construct**: Nightmare Guardians ignore ordinary fear, intimidation, or shock.
• **Heavy Dream Frame**: They possess **AR 1**, representing layered symbolic mass and partial resistance to lesser blows.
• **Guardian Instinct**: If defending a child, dream-core, or central threshold point, they gain **+10** on their first attack or defensive reaction in a scene.
• **Door-Warp Assault**: Once per scene, a guardian may slam a floating door, frame fragment, or dream-wall into a target, forcing a Grace or Might test to avoid being knocked prone or driven off position.

Nightmare Imp

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Claws, Bite, or Rift-Scratch — 1d6

Nightmare Imps are nasty little breach-things: fast, hunched, bright-eyed in all the wrong ways, and usually too delighted by the room they have just entered. They may appear goblin-like, insectile, doll-faced, or skinless in a way that suggests someone built a child's monster from panic and forgot the finishing layer of shame. Their limbs are quick, their teeth are expressive, and their joy in sudden violence is the sort that makes bedrooms feel personally insulted.

Imps are excellent threshold scavengers and early breach predators. They enter first, test what frightens easily, and begin making the space worse before larger entities arrive. A Nightmare Imp in a domestic environment always feels like a violation: too quick, too playful, and far too comfortable under furniture.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Rift Skitter**: Nightmare Imps gain Advantage on movement through clutter, small openings, and unstable breach-space.
• **Startle Hunter**: If they attack a surprised or frightened target, their first hit deals **+2 damage**.
• **Minor Dreamstep**: Once per scene, an Imp may slip a very short distance through shadow, under-bed dark, closet seam, or breach flicker.

• **Cowardly When Hurt**: If isolated or badly wounded, an Imp prefers retreat, concealment, or reinforcements over martyrdom.

Nightmare Spawn

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Claw, Slam, or Shriek — 1d6+1

Nightmare Spawn are larger, less tidy manifestations of concentrated fear and dream-corruption. Where Imps are scavengers, Spawn are enforcers—bodies built from panic that have learned enough weight to push back. Their shapes vary according to the local nightmare pressure: overgrown children's silhouettes, black-limbed quadrupeds with too many joints, faceless playroom giants, or crude stitched masses of cloth-shadow and bone-light. They should feel like bad dreams given enough confidence to stand up straight.

A Nightmare Spawn changes the mood of a scene immediately. They are strong enough to be real problems and symbolic enough to make the room around them misbehave. Walls seem closer. Echoes sharpen. Small lights feel suddenly insufficient.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Panic-Borne Strength**: A Nightmare Spawn's successful hit may also impose **-10** on the target's next composure, awareness, or fear resistance test.
• **Dream-Fueled**: In rooms with high emotional residue, sleeping victims, or active breaches, the Spawn may ignore the first minor hindrance or penalty it would otherwise suffer.
• **Shriek of Distortion**: Once per scene, it may unleash a shrill burst of nightmare pressure, forcing nearby creatures to test Endurance or Awareness to avoid losing momentum or clean action.
• **Threshold Predator**: Spawn are drawn to vulnerable dream-sites and often appear shortly before a breach worsens.

Night-Between Scout

Threat: 2
Wounds: 3
Armor: 0
Attack: Shadow Spear, Hook, or Claw — 1d6+1

Night-Between Scouts are liminal hunters and watchers who move between spaces rather than through them. They tend to be tall, narrow, and silhouette-heavy, with just enough detail to imply a person and just enough wrongness to make the implication unwelcome. Their limbs may taper too long, their joints may fold slightly late, and their faces are often hidden by veils, smooth masks, or simple darkness where expression should be. They are not dream-creatures exactly, nor ordinary Trespassers either. They feel older than both and less interested in your categories.

Scouts are patient, territorial, and very good at deciding whether a scene is worth committing to. They watch from edges, sample breaches, follow weak routes, and test strange new threshold behavior before larger or more dangerous entities commit themselves. They are perfect for campaign moments where the players should realize that other things have noticed the instability before the Vigil has named it properly.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Edge Movement**: Night-Between Scouts gain Advantage on stealth, ambush, and repositioning near thresholds, corners, dark doorframes, and breach-space.
• **Cold Presence**: Their proximity may impose **-10** on a target's next composure or calm-concentration

test if the target is already uneasy.
• **Watcher's Patience**: A Scout prefers to observe and strike with advantage rather than enter a fair fight.
• **Threshold Intelligence**: They often understand portal behavior, weak seams, and strange route changes before local defenders do.

Shadowling

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Claw or Shadow Bite — 1d4+1

Shadowlings are small, quick, and exactly the sort of creature one hates seeing in a room where a child is supposed to be sleeping. They are not truly made of shadow, but they use it shamelessly: little dark-limbed things with soft-edged feet, lamp-shy faces, and the irritating ability to turn an ordinary basement corner into a moral objection. Their eyes may glimmer briefly, or not at all. Their teeth are often more visible than the rest of them, which is rude but effective.

Shadowlings are among the most useful low-threat breach creatures in **CREEPS!** because they communicate so much so quickly: the threshold is open enough for lesser things, the dark is no longer private, and the house is now participating whether it wants to or not. They are scavengers, skulkers, and opportunists. In groups, they become much more irritating than their individual statistics suggest.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Shadow Creep**: Shadowlings gain Advantage on stealth in low light, basement spaces, under-bed dark, and cluttered corners.
• **Pack Nerve**: A lone Shadowling is a nuisance; several become much bolder and gain **+10** on their first coordinated attack.
• **Basement Confidence**: They ignore ordinary hesitation in storage rooms, boiler rooms, closets, and similar domestic threshold spaces.
• **Flee When Pressed**: Unless cornered or driven by stronger force, Shadowlings usually break and scatter rather than die bravely.

Shadowmass

Threat: 3
Wounds: 5
Armor: 1
Attack: Crushing Tendril or Smothering Surge — 1d8

A Shadowmass is what happens when too much wrong darkness is allowed to pool in one place and decide it has shape now. Unlike a Shadowling, which still resembles a creature, a Shadowmass resembles an event. It may spread across walls, gather into a low breathing mound, rise into a broad-limbed smear of mass and tendril, or pour itself through a chamber like spilled ink learning appetite. Glints of teeth, eyes, toy fragments, broken chalk marks, or trapped reflections may appear in it and vanish again without courtesy.

These beings are excellent late-stage breach threats, nexus complications, and edge-region horrors. They do not have to be fast to be frightening. They change the logic of space around them simply by occupying it. A Shadowmass in a scene makes every ordinary patch of dark feel politically unstable.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Smothering Body**: A successful hit may seize or partially engulf the target, requiring a Might or Grace test to break free cleanly.
• **Heavy Dark**: The Shadowmass has **AR 1**,

representing its resistance to simple weapon strikes and diffuse body structure.
• **Room-Hunger**: In darkness or breach-lit environments, it may expand its influence, making stealth, positioning, or line of sight worse for everyone else.
• **Light Aversion**: Strong light, cleansing effects, or threshold stabilization may weaken it as effectively as direct damage.

Tall Smile

Threat: 2
Wounds: 4
Armor: 0
Attack: Fear Reach or Crushing Grasp — 1d6 psychic or physical

The Tall Smile is not, strictly speaking, a creature in the same way the others are. It is a fear-form: Elias's private nightmare made large enough, consistent enough, and emotionally burdened enough to stand inside the dream as though it were a person. It appears as a towering child-drawn figure with wrong-length limbs, a body too narrow in some angles and too broad in others, and a smile that reads first as threat, then as grief, then as something like both at once. It should be one of the most visually memorable beings in the adventure.

The Tall Smile matters because it looks like the villain until it doesn't. It is terrifying, yes, but also mournful. It sits among toys. It cries. It recoils more like a wounded feeling than a predator when struck unfairly. It is fear with posture, not malice with a face. The Cohort's treatment of the Tall Smile can influence later dream scenes and the emotional shape of the finale.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Fear Form**: Its presence imposes **-10** on fear resistance or calm composure tests until its nature is better understood.
• **Not the Core Threat**: The Tall Smile is more likely to warn, recoil, or misdirect than to pursue straightforward slaughter unless cornered or provoked.
• **Emotional Mirror**: It often reacts to Elias's fear, loneliness, or trust state more than to tactical stimulus.
• **Dream-Softened**: Dreamcraft, empathy, or symbolic reassurance may calm or redirect it more effectively than violence.

The Waking Child

Threat: 4
Wounds: 6
Armor: 0
Attack: Dream Surge, Threshold Pull, or Psychic Cry — 1d8 psychic

The Waking Child is the central liminal being of the campaign: pale, translucent, candle-eyed, and painfully unfinished. He appears child-shaped but not fully child-made, as though a dream, a memory, and a portal accident all agreed reluctantly on an outline and never reconciled the details. One side of his face or body may seem almost real. The other flickers with erasure. He is fragile-looking in a way that makes his actual danger worse, not better.

The Waking Child is not a conventional monster. He is a fractured being born of threshold disaster, dream attachment, and unfinished selfhood. He wants completion, reunion, and the end of separation. Unfortunately, his methods place Elias, the Human World, and Limbo itself at risk. In the finale, he should feel less like a boss encounter and more like a living catastrophe trying to solve its own pain badly.

Traits & Abilities:

- **Dream-Bound Presence:** The Waking Child exerts strong influence over dream-linked spaces, child-thresholds, and emotionally unstable portals.
- **Threshold Pull:** Once per scene, he may drag a creature, object, or part of the environment closer through symbolic or spatial force, requiring a Grace, Might, or Dreamcraft-appropriate resistance.
- **Psychic Cry:** His distress can become an attack, imposing damage and possibly **-10** on the target's next clear action through emotional overload.
- **Fragmented Being:** He is not fully stable; persuasion, ritual healing, or reunification logic may affect him as strongly as direct harm.
- **Not Purely Villainous:** Violence alone may stop him, but it does not answer the actual problem at the heart of the story.

Recurring Adventure NPCs

These entries are written in the same broad format, but with the understanding that they are more likely to function as **Companion-grade figures, mission contacts, or vulnerable principals** than as standard enemies.

Bibble Ashpocket

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Utility Knife, Tool, or Panic Swing — 1d4

Bibble Ashpocket is the sort of little Creep who should, by all rights, live a long and unremarkable life carrying route chalk, fixing seals, filing complaints about assignments, and never once being asked to witness a child-shaped dream anomaly. Fate, unfortunately, has no professional ethics.

Bibble is small, soot-smudged, quick-handed, and permanently equipped with the expression of someone who had intended to do a simple maintenance task and is now entitled to three extra meals and a formal apology from reality.

He matters because he was among the first Creeps to encounter the flickering threshold directly and survive long enough to say the thing no one wanted to hear: "It looked like a child." Bibble is not a heroic bruiser, but he is a useful witness, route worker, and cautionary example.

Traits & Abilities:

- **Route Worker:** Bibble gains Advantage on portal maintenance, chalk marking, basic threshold handling, and reading local route clutter.
- **Bad First Witness:** His testimony is shaky, frightened, but valuable.
- **Field Survivor:** He may not love danger, but he has now survived enough of it to recognize wrongness faster than before.
- **Companion Use:** Bibble works best as a witness-contact, support Creep, or reluctant helper in follow-up missions.

Elias

Threat: 1
Wounds: 1
Armor: 0
Attack: None

Elias is the human child at the center of the campaign. Pale from exhaustion, dark-circled from bad sleep, and increasingly burdened by a relationship he does not understand, he should never be treated as a device instead of a person. He is lonely, frightened, curious, and trying to be kind in exactly the wrong supernatural circumstances.

His room, drawings, and sleep-state are central to the entire crisis.

Elias is not possessed. He is in communication. That distinction matters. Around him, the supernatural always feels more intimate and more unfair. He is not "the chosen child." He is simply the one who ended up holding half a broken thing.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Dream Anchor**: Elias's sleep state influences the nearby threshold structure.
• **Child's Sight**: Depending on the scene, he may perceive Creeps or dream-beings more clearly than adults around him.
• **Emotional Center**: Elias's fear, calm, trust, or distress may shift the tone and mechanical pressure of scenes around him.
• **Companion Use**: Elias is best used as a protected principal, dream anchor, or emotionally central rescue figure rather than an active Companion in field movement.

Rilli Softstitch

Threat: 1
Wounds: 2
Armor: 0
Attack: Chalk Knife, Sling, or Quick Tool — 1d4

Rilli Softstitch is a young Truant with enough courage to be admirable and enough initiative to be catastrophic without supervision. Quick, curious, and far too willing to go one tunnel deeper "just to check," Rilli is exactly the sort of Creep who finds the real clue first and nearly gets eaten by it before anyone else finishes the briefing. Her gear is usually a mess of chalk, thread charms, satchel scraps, and field notes written in increasingly bad handwriting as the danger rises.

Rilli matters because she pushes the campaign forward through unauthorized curiosity and survives just long enough to hand the Cohort the next truth. She is especially useful as a later witness, occasional route guide, or recurring mission Creep with unfinished nerves and too much first-hand knowledge.

Traits & Abilities:
• **Truant Instinct**: Rilli gains Advantage on sneaking, side-route movement, and getting into places she was specifically told not to be.
• **Chalk Witness**: Her drawings and field marks often become useful clues.
• **Tunnel Shaken**: After the events of the adventure, deep dream-ridden tunnels may still rattle her.
• **Companion Use**: Rilli is excellent as a temporary Companion in route scenes, clue hunts, or Truant-heavy adventures.

The Tall Smile (NPC Variant)

If you want the Tall Smile indexed as a recurring dream-personality rather than only a creature, use the entry above but treat it as **non-hostile unless fear or misunderstanding pushes it into conflict**.

The Waking Child (NPC Variant)

If you want the Waking Child indexed as a recurring post-campaign figure rather than only a final entity, use the entry above but adjust Threat and Wounds downward or upward depending on the ending chosen. In a **Containment** aftermath campaign, he may become a recurring liminal NPC rather than a straight adversary.

CREEPS!

Character Name _____

Kin _____

Archetype _____

Might ☐ Awareness ☐

Grace ☐ Intellect ☐

Endurance ☐ Presence ☐

Essence ☐ AR ⬠ Destiny ☐ Wound Status:

Traits

SKills

Gear

Main Weapon

Spells

In every darkened hallway, in every child's bedroom closet, in every creaking cupboard you swear wasn't open a minute ago…
something watches back.

They are **Creeps**: odd little guardians born in the astral pocket-realm of Limbo.
Cute, eerie, furry, scaly, tiny, twisted, or strangely charming, Creeps protect the fragile boundary between the Human World and countless dimensional passages humming with dream-stuff.

Each night, Cohorts of Creeps answer the call of **Trespassers**, **Truants**, and **Invaders** slipping between realms. They navigate fungus-lit caverns, spiraling roots, shadowed tunnels, fungal forests, dream-rifts, and old forgotten portals left behind by ancient cultures.

This game book presents:

- Fully playable Creeps with randomized Kin, quirks, names, and innate abilities
- Archetypes like Portal Engineer, Dastard, Warden of the Passages, and more
- A complete Skill, Sorcery, and Combat system
- Limbo lore, Human World secrets, monster Bestiary, and Creepmaster tools
- A Six-Part Adventure: *Shadows of the Waking Child*

Open a door.
Light a lantern.
Take a step into the impossible.
Limbo awaits — and it needs you.